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over the horrid old death's-head in order to have her pass muster on promenade in broad daylight. Terms and phraseology have great powers of prepossession. Awhile ago, for instance, it was pleasanter to say that our associates in the war were "funding the interest" on their debts to us, than to say bluntly that they defaulted. So when the Hythe conference puts out its statement about "a settlement which will embrace the whole body of international liabilities," it really means pooling the debts, but is too polite to say so. It is the firm intention of our former associates that the United States shall by one means or another be made to "hold the bag"; they have never had any other idea since the United States entered the war. That intention will become more and more evident from now on. The minds of our people are being prepared for it by the dispatches, and the forthcoming conferences will bring it out in all its glory.

CURRENT COMMENT.

HERE is something really worth while. In Washington, 10 May, Mr. Chamberlain, our former Consul-general in Mexico, gave a straightforward, foursquare, definite programme of what we should do in Mexico:

We should offer a loan sufficient to put its finances in shape, bound up with a treaty which would give us direct supervision of its economic affairs. The second step should be to withdraw the present recognition unless that was accepted. Still failing acceptance, the third step should be embargo; the fourth, commercial blockade; the fifth, a naval demonstration; lastly, a military occupancy.

One can understand that kind of talk and respect it. It is free from the nauseating humbug and buncombe which always goes with a British or American project of robbing one's neighbours. It advocates simple and undecorated highwaymanry; and if we can't resist the temptation to steal Mexico's property, let us by all means have the manly hardihood to say so, and not go snuffling around with our customary line of disgusting cant about doing Mexico for her own good, making Mexico safe for democracy, or what not. All honour to Mr. Chamberlain; this paper detests his doctrine, but it respects him sincerely, and trusts that his example will prevail mightily among the other buccaners in Washington whose jaws are slaverling over Mexico at this moment.

THE more or less informal conference between Messrs. Lloyd George and Millerand, at Hythe, has blazed the trail for the formal conferences shortly to be held at Spa and at Brussels. The game is this; to get the United States Government, or failing that, to get United States banking interests, to loan an immense amount of money, taking the German indemnity as security. Then when Germany defaults, it will be our pleasant duty to levy on Germany for the security, while our late associates sit back at their ease and watch us do it. That is the whole sum and substance of the scheme, and if our Government docilely permits itself to be turned into a collection-agency for these brethren, there is simply no limit to its easiness.

THE official statement given out after the Hythe conference speaks of "capitalization of Germany's debts." That is a mighty nice name for the foregoing project. In fact, a whole shopful of cosmetics has to be plastered

THERE is probably something more than a mere desire to embarrass Mr. Lloyd George in the demand of certain British Liberals that the League of Nations take over the work of the Supreme Council. A large section of the British public is strongly opposed to the continued existence of the Supreme Council, with its concentration of immense power in so few, and really irresponsible hands. It would prefer to see the League of Nations, ostensibly created for that purpose, take over the work of adjusting international relations. One can sympathize with this point of view. Why incur the expense of a League, if it is to do nothing but pay salaries? Still, there are practical difficulties in the way. Although the Supreme Council acts slowly, it does act, whereas the League of Nations, with a dozen different nationalities represented—each of which would view every question in the light of its own interest—and with a unanimous vote required for any settlement, would reach a permanent impasse within twenty-four hours. Another point to remember is that the swag is not yet entirely disposed of, and naturally the Supreme Council has no notion of letting the neutrals in until that job is finished.

IF the news that comes this way from Constantinople is sound and reliable, the Allies need give themselves no further concern on the subject of a mandate for Armenia, for indeed it seems that the Russian Bolsheviks and the Turkish Nationalists have decided to play "baith fayther and mither" to this waif among the nations. The trouble began when the Tartar Bolsheviks took control of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and, with the backing of the Bolshevik Commissary of the northern Caucasus, demanded that the Armenian Government surrender certain territories and give free passage across Armenia to Asia Minor for troops marching to the aid of Mustapha Kemal, the Turkish Nationalist leader. When the Tartar ultimatum was delivered, the Armenian railroads were already controlled by local Soviets. These and other labour groups apparently had a strong fellow-feeling for the Soviet party in Azerbaijan, for no sooner had President Khatitjan refused the Tartar request than his Government was overthrown by some sort of combination of Turks and Armenian Bolsheviks, and a Soviet took control of the capital. And now they say that direct communication has been established between the Moscow Government and Mustapha Kemal Pasha. In the old days Socialism had some standing as an international movement—but in the gayest days of the Geneva

International the Marxians hardly hoped that they would so soon bring together the Mussulman Turks, the Primitive-Christian Armenians, and the Orthodox Russians.

THE Chinese consortium having been duly considered for some two years by Japan, Great Britain, France and the United States, and the terms having at last been agreed upon, China may now have an opportunity to learn what fate has been prepared for her. The final acceptance of the consortium by Japan—terms not specifically announced—has been referred to in the Washington dispatches as a victory for American diplomacy. And indeed it may be so, for American financial interests can not but profit by the acquisition of a rich and fully protected field of investment overseas. But one may ask very earnestly whether in the process of fastening this international trusteeship upon China we have removed all the evils of the older competitive system. The first announcement of Japan's acceptance of the consortium stated that Japan would still have "the right to object to loans for any work which she feels will jeopardize her national life or vitally affect her sovereignty." Since there has been no specific denial of this report and no publication of the terms of the consortium, and since Japan's feelings on the subject of her national life and sovereignty are notoriously tender, we are bound to suppose that Japan still retains most of the special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia which she has been at such pains to exclude from the action of the consortium. This is just one more way of saying that the victory for American diplomacy appears to have been won at the expense of China rather than of Japan. Apparently we have not even gone to the trouble to protect China fully from exploitation of the old sort, but have supplemented, rather than eliminated the ardent and individualistic activities of Japan, by the establishment of the new trusteeship.

THE Congress will not let our 275 state of war with Germany drag on through the campaign and into the next Administration if it can help it. The Knox resolution throws the matter into conference, where the chances are it will tarry not long. There seems to be ground for believing that the President will interpose a veto. If he does, he will pulverize the poor routed leavings of the Democratic party, which is no irreparable misfortune. As a campaign-issue, the Treaty of Versailles is about as valuable as the Isidorian Decretals or the Code of Draco, and if the President insists on submitting it to a "solemn referendum" next fall, it will need a lot of earnest pushing. The electorate is not worrying about the Treaty of Versailles nor yet about the League of Nations. It has too many other things on its mind, things that seem of more importance. The Congress and the campaign-managers are quite well aware of this, but the fact does not yet appear to have reached the President.

ANOTHER little item that is pretty sure to be gotten out of the way before election is the batch of political prisoners. A delegation of Socialists did themselves the injustice of going to Washington the other day to petition for the release of Eugene Debs and for a general amnesty. Mr. Tumulty promised that the President would give due consideration to the request, and no doubt the victims will be released in time to avoid prejudice in the campaign, and no sooner. It is greatly to the Socialists' credit that they have nominated Eugene Debs. Few better men have lived. Incapable of meanness, hypocrisy, deceit or indecency, he found his logical place in prison in the hour when all these qualities bore their highest premium and their exponents enjoyed unqualified preponderance. As James Whitcomb Riley said, God must have been feeling uncommonly good when He created Eugene Debs, and one may add that He must be feeling even better over the latter phases of Debs's life.

THE Non-partisan League of South Dakota has indorsed Senator La Follette for the Presidency. If there is to be a third party, it would find Mr. La Follette the best candidate available. He would make a wider reconciliation and agreement among disaffected interests and also draw more largely on the marginal votes in the old parties, than any other person as yet in view. It would seem the part of wisdom for the promoters of a third party to unite on Senator La Follette, and equally the part of wisdom for Senator La Follette to refuse to be united on. The Senator is a man of conspicuous honesty, integrity and ability—was he not one of Mr. Wilson's wilful men? He has surely by this time had enough experience of practical politics to be aware that he brought such wares to a poor market in the Senatorship and that in the Presidency he would bring them to no market at all. No man of his type can hold public office with satisfaction to himself or with enough profit to society to make the sacrifice worth while. One does Robert La Follette honour in saying that office-holding is for such and such only as have consistently traduced and abused him, and that he is notably and deplorably out of place in it.

READERS of this paper who remember Mr. George Russell's analysis of the British Government's Irish Bill in the issue of 28 April, were probably not surprised at the statement in a news dispatch of 11 May, anent the discussion of the bill in the Commons, that

some observers thought there was an air of unreality about the whole proceedings, is if back of everybody's mind was the conviction that nothing could come of it all.

No one with a grain of common sense could feel otherwise, in view of the present situation in Ireland. The bill pleases no one, save perhaps Dublin Castle, and it is doubtful if even the military mind of Lord French is naïve enough to believe it could be made to work. The parties most concerned have certainly not been encouraging. Ulster, in the person of Carson, has washed its hands of responsibility; so too have the Nationalists; while the Sinn Feiners are too busy with their own plans for the Government of Ireland to worry about Mr. Lloyd George's.

As between the Sinn Fein Government and Mr. Lloyd George's, the former would seem to be the more effective. Mr. Lloyd George is omnipotent in the spot where his cohorts happen to be, but Sinn Fein rules supreme around the corner. There are intimations that the Georgian cohorts consider that Government in spots is coming rather high. The Irish constabulary has threatened to strike. We also learn that the Sinn Fein courts are administering justice in cases where the British authorities have been powerless. The secret Government of Sinn Fein, by all indications, is functioning admirably, because it has the consent of the governed.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL stated in the Parliamentary debates recently, that 41,000 troops are employed in Ireland as against a normal 25,000 before the war. The cost of maintenance is a little over half a million dollars weekly. That amount of money would go some way on the interest of England's foreign debts.

NATURALLY the British Government feels a certain delicacy in the little matter of our seizure of the Island of Taboga. Loaded down as it is with swag from all the seven seas, it doubtless feels that to point an accusing finger at our little bit of piracy would be in questionable taste. At any rate, the Government's spokesman replying to a query in the House of Commons, stated that it did not feel called upon to make any protest in the matter. Such an attitude is becoming in the British Government, but British politicians can hardly be expected to eschew the fine opportunity for a *tu quoque* which our latest robbery in Central America offers them, and so another rod for the bruising of Anglo-American good relations goes into pickle.

THE new British budget raises the taxes on excess profits and on profits; the supertax on incomes above £30,000; the tax on spirits, wines, cigars and stamped paper; and it raises first-class postage and the price of telegrams. No form of industry or enterprise escapes. The land-value taxes, however, are repealed. Having noted this thoughtful tribute to privilege, the reader's consideration of the budget may now be adjourned.

THIS paper's recent exhortations to capital to borrow the strike-weapon from labour seem only narrowly to anticipate other expressions of the same doctrine. The *New York Times* prints an item predicting the possibility of a general lockout, "the manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers simply closing their doors and letting come what may." This would be chiefly by way of "protest against further nagging and taxation on the part of Congress." In the *Tribune* for 16 May, also, the chairman of the Chase National Bank makes much the same sort of prophecy in a half-page interview. This is something like; only it is a pity to start such a big ball rolling without a definite course marked out for it to roll on. Before applying the pressure of economic organization upon the Government, get out a well-considered and positive programme for the Government to act upon. It would be a fine thing if labour could be let in on the construction of such a programme. Before the session were half over, labour and capital would get more than an inkling of the identity of their interests, and begin to discover ground for a united stand against their common enemy, privilege.

WHAT will happen when the products of highly paid American and British artisans compete in the world's markets, as they must sooner or later, with the work of highly skilled German workmen receiving about three dollars a week? To this conundrum one hesitates to offer an answer which might seem to sensitive souls to impinge upon the frontiers of pro-Germanism, but after all business is business and one may at least surmise that under such conditions German manufacturers will have a long start of their rivals in other countries. Already a remarkable change has taken place in the class and style of German manufacturers. Gimcracks and shoddy goods, which made up a large part of the trade which the Germans had built up under their protective system, are giving place to products of high quality. It is plainly evident that German manufacturers are making every effort, despite distressing economic conditions, to resume their place in the world's markets. The remarkable success of the recent Leipzig Spring Fair, at which the numbers of German exhibitors and foreign visitors beat all pre-war records, shows which way the wind is blowing. A report of the Fair in a recent issue of the *London Economist* states:

A feature is the predominance of high-priced goods and articles of luxury. The tendency to transfer industrial activity to high-priced and fine goods is very marked all over Germany; the cause is that raw materials are dear and scarce, while labour is plentiful, and, measured in any sound currency, extremely cheap—a skilled workman draws around three American dollars weekly. Hence, greater profits are promised, and labour is kept better employed by producing fine and elaborate goods which owe their selling value mainly to skill.

Which brings one back to the conundrum propounded above.

THE popular sport of hunting the profiteer has lately taken a new and hopeful turn in England. Amidst a welter of strikes and rumours of strikes in that distressful island (mostly the outcome of demands for wage-increases to meet the cost of living) the leaders of the Railwaymen, Miners and Transport Workers' Unions—the Triple Alliance—appalled by the continuing futility of fighting for wage-increases which, when won, are rendered useless by an equivalent and simultaneous increase in the cost of living—have invoked another proletarian

Big Three—the executive Committees of the Trade Union Congress, the Labour party and the Co-operative movement—to join with the Triple Alliance in a searching inquiry into the reasons for the high cost of living and to work out a plan for its reduction. This journal respectfully tenders its congratulations to the men and women who have this piece of work in hand. Many more than the workers of Britain will be obliged to them if they can discover a cure for the present discontents. Their report is to be presented at an early date. One is not without hope of hearing a few radical truths from the representatives of such a mighty aggregation of the working class whose approach to any task, unlike that of the Barnacle family, is how to do it.

THE various rent-bills that passed the New York Legislature, last session, were too futile to comment upon. The only remedy for a shortage in housing is to build more houses, and the only place where houses can be built is on the land. So it is a little remarkable that during the present shortage, no one has noticed that about forty-nine per cent of the superficial area of New York City is vacant land, and that no penalty has been proposed for keeping valuable sites out of use. Is it not a little remarkable that the only business that measurably escapes the fines and taxes imposed upon industry, is the business of land-owning?

As filthy and disreputable an effort as ever was made to prejudice a cause, is reported of Mr. Henry A. Wise Wood in bringing before Governor Smith a book entitled "Married Love" to influence his action on the Lusk-Martin bills. Mr. Wood is reported in the *New York Times* as quoting paragraphs from this book at the Governor's hearing, and as saying to the Governor, "You don't realize the rottenness of these people"—meaning the authorities of the Rand School of Social Science. The book in question is by Dr. Stopes, a reputable English authority; it has had a large and unimpeded circulation in England; it is on sale generally in the city of New York at other bookshops beside that of the Rand School. Another newspaper-report states that the book had been submitted to the office of the District-Attorney and had sustained inquisition. To hold it objectionable simply argues the possession of the kind of mind that needs periodical disinfection. No tactics seem too low and dirty for hole-and-corner Luskery to adopt.

MR. LEFFINGWELL, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, told the Academy of Political Science the other day that "we must promptly revise our tax-laws to make them more equitable and less burdensome without reducing revenue." He should have added "and without taxing privilege," since that is the primary object of all our fiscal policy-makers. Mr. Leffingwell did not forget to shovel in the usual tamping to an address of this kind, in the shape of advice to produce more and consume less, to work and save. The trouble with all these experts is that they never think it worth while to tell us why we should work, produce and save. With industry and enterprise bearing an unconscionable burden of taxation, and now Senator Smoot proposing to increase that burden by a tax on retail sales, and privilege meanwhile going practically tax-free, what earthly inducement is there to work and save? What is the matter with these mentors of ours, anyway?

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

A MODEST DEMAND.

THE railways are now asking \$125,000,000 as an immediate loan from the so-called "revolving fund" in order to purchase equipment. They intimate, or their spokesmen in the newspapers intimate for them, that if they get more equipment, they can move some freight. It is hard to see how this follows. There is said to be a great shortage of box-cars. This may be; if so, there should be more box-cars supplied. But the chief trouble is that what box-cars there are, do not seem to move. They are gorged on sidings and in yards; centres and terminal points are full of them. There is nothing recondite about the situation. Any one who wants to know the practical facts of it need only try to ship some freight from anywhere to anywhere. Nay, all he need do is to take a ride by daylight and keep his eyes open, counting up the volume of freight he sees moving, and observing the congestion at the centres. If he lives at a gateway or an important terminal, he would get a hundred times better information about the state of the railways by spending an hour in one of the freight-yards than by reading all the newspapers to be published between now and doomsday. It is by no means clear how additional equipment, especially of box-cars, will help get freight in motion when the railways can not or do not move what box-cars they have.

There is no point to disparaging or prejudicing this particular demand of the railways. The public may profitably be warned, however, against any undue optimism in case the demand be granted. It will take a good deal more than the mere money that the railways are asking, in order to establish a satisfactory service and have it stay established as long as it takes to establish it. The men in the employ of the railways are not in a good frame of mind. That is, indeed, the trouble at the present time. The strike is not over; it was not over when the railways officially resumed operation last month. The newspapers, which had the strike all most comfortably dead and buried as soon as the passenger-trains resumed their schedule, even now manage their reports of the situation so loosely as to show on their face that the real reason why freight does not move is what we used to call in war-time a "failure in manpower." One newspaper, indeed, and one of the most conservative at that, printed a dispatch the other day saying that there was a conspiracy of silence on foot to discredit the strike. The railway-executives can take advantage of this situation and they would be poor heads at business, as business goes, if they did not. They want more money. The public is bothered to death by their failure to move freight which they can not move because they have not the men to move it. The railway-executives would be supremely silly if they did not represent their state of helplessness as one that could be mended with money. The present time is most favourable to their demands; none could be more so. Any prospect, even the most illusory, of any kind of transportation would so prepossess the public that the railways could hardly ask too much. As for the realization of those prospects, the railways would gladly trust to Micawber's hope that something would turn up.

It would be an interesting experiment if the executives gave way to every demand of the railwaymen,

to see how long they would be satisfied and to find out just what it is that they want and are driving at. If their final demands are really for more wages, that is easily ascertained; when they get more wages, they will be satisfied and make no more trouble. If not, the nature of their final demands will become apparent all the sooner and all the sooner can be understood and dealt with. Perhaps the dissatisfaction of the railwaymen can be permanently assuaged by money; but again, perhaps it is something more than a matter of wages, something that arises out of a consciousness of fundamental wrong and injustice and therefore hardly to be reached by wage-increases. The co-operative spirit has been bred among the railwaymen, and has of late taken shape in some very advanced practical policies and measures which this paper will shortly say something about. Indeed, it is highly probable that the great next step in the development of trade-unionism in this country will be taken first by the railwaymen and the clothing-workers. The Plumb plan took hold of the railwaymen and the essential idea of it has kept hold of them. They saw it assassinated by Mr. Gompers and left to die the death of the unrighteous, and the infamous Esch-Cummins letter-of-marque issued in its stead; and this experience was highly educative.

These men are intelligent; they know the history of the American railway. They know that the railway is perhaps foremost among our privileged interests. They know, as we all know, that the total of public lands granted to our railways is over 300,000 square miles, an area almost as large as France plus the British Isles. The grant to the Northern Pacific Railway alone was worth one billion dollars. A Congressional committee reported that the entire cost of the railway had been paid for out of the land grants, and that a surplus remained of more than forty million dollars. In addition to land, the railways have received enormous grants of both money and bonds. The five Pacific railways received from the Federal Government alone, exclusive of contributions from State and municipal authorities, bonds to the amount of sixty-four million dollars!

Talk about privilege!—think of owning the economic rent of over 300,000 square miles of land in the United States. It fairly takes one's breath away. A recent authority has estimated that if the land granted to the Northern Pacific had been sold to settlers at the prices charged later by the railway, the Government could have built five transcontinental railways with the money. Well, now, the railwaymen know all this and more besides; it is the mere policy of the ostrich to pretend that they do not. Mr. Plumb and his associates have not been keeping it dark, and there is quite a large popular literature on the subject, some of which, at least, must have escaped Mr. Palmer. The railwaymen too, have seen every one of the railways, these children of privilege, run not as a railway but as a fortune-maker and dividend-producer. Furthermore, they have had what the motion-picture people call a close-up on it; they have not been sitting in the grand-stand. The maintenance-of-way men, the section-bosses, all know why their requisitions are scamped and know where the money goes that should go to honour those requisitions. Now, under the Esch-Cummins law, they see the railways go back into the same old hands to be managed in the same old way, and they know precisely what is going to happen. Mr. Shea, vice-president of the firemen's union, told the Railway Labour

Board on 14 May very specifically what will happen; and what Mr. Shea knows, the rest know.

The railways may very well get their \$125,000,000 from the revolving fund; they may get their twenty-eight per cent increase in freight-rates. Under the sunshine of the Esch-Cummins law, they ought to be able to make a great deal of hay. Perhaps they should have these gratuities; perhaps they should have twice as much. Whatever they are entitled to as a matter of right, however, the public may well ease down on any rosy expectations about an immediate or permanent improvement in transportation. The railways may, of course, use this money in acquiring a new lot of railwaymen who do not know anything and can not read. That would mend matters for a while, probably, pretty well. But in default of that expedient, it is likely that many a shipper will acquire grey hair and a vocabulary that Captain Kidd would regard with worshipful envy, before he can bill a carload of freight a hundred miles with the casual nonchalance of the good old days.

300,000,000 PIECES OF SILVER.

Two questions present themselves in connexion with the effort of the Interchurch World Movement to raise by public subscription a fund of \$300,000,000 for "social work." First, is this "social work" to be undertaken in accord with Christian social teaching as found in the Gospels, or is it to be a benevolent and philanthropic undertaking? In other words, do the churches propose to work in the spirit of Mr. Ade's exhortation, "in uplifting, get underneath," or do they merely wish to dole out charity? To realize practically the common brotherhood which is the essence of the Christian social teaching would be to accomplish an economic revolution. Are the churches prepared for this, or have they merely decided that something must be done in the way of social betterment, that some concession must be made to the growth of radical ideas? Are they interested in justice or are they merely addicted to philanthropy?

Assuming that the purpose of the movement is as truly Christian as it is churchly, a second question arises, thus: Are the American churches qualified to execute such a trust as they are now seeking to take upon themselves? Do they know actually what social justice is, and what its practical implications are? The relation of the churches to the workers is not exactly a close one, and the reason is not far to seek. The masses are awakening to the fact that in their struggles to wrest concessions from the grudging hand of privilege, the church is pretty generally to be found against them. Their efforts have been and are denounced from the pulpit nine times to once where they have been supported. Not unnaturally, therefore, they are coming to distrust the church, not realizing that like themselves it is duped and victimized by privilege. When privilege finds that it can not destroy a formidable movement it perverts it to its own purposes. It early perverted the Christian church, changing it from a true commonwealth into the very epitome and bulwark of European aristocracy and feudalism. In America, organized Christianity has not fared much better. Privilege has always had it pretty well in hand. Privilege makes large contributions to the upkeep of the churches, and in return sees to it that no inimical teaching is tolerated in the pulpit. It takes care that the men trained for the cloth are imbued with a greater respect for the God of Things as

They Are than for Him who would make all things new. It is therefore not surprising to find ministers of religion everywhere denouncing labour in its disputes with privilege. It is not to be doubted that they are perfectly sincere; they are simply thinking as they have been taught to think, and acting as they have been taught to act.

The masses, however, see only one thing, but that they see clearly enough, that the church is against them; and therefore they distrust the church. They distrust it all the more since with sounding trumpets and clashing cymbals it went over, book, bell, and pulpit to the business of war, leaving only a few Quaker and Dunkard meeting houses to be a refuge for fugitive and unpatriotic Christianity. The common man, not wholly indifferent to the message of Jesus, feels himself to be a victim of a gigantic hoax, and he feels that the churches, instead of standing by him, have done all they could to mislead him and take him in. These, it may be surmised, are some of the main grounds for the general disaffection among the masses which blocks the way for any effective performance of the task which the Interchurch World Movement has set itself. Here is a formidable obstacle which the American churches, singly or banded together in a single movement, seem hardly qualified to overcome. It is not three hundred millions of dollars but a spiritual revolution which alone can save them, and there are no visible signs of a spiritual revolution in the body of orthodox Christianity.

SOCIALISM ADOPTS SYNDICALISM.

"It must be either a fight . . . behind barricades, . . . or a political fight. . . . If we want to fight in the streets, there is no need for going into politics. We must arm for the revolution."—otherwise, of course, we must vote for it.

In these burning words, addressed to the comrades recently assembled on this Island of Manhattan for the National Convention of the Socialist Party, Morris Hillquit confessed that abiding faith in political action and political democracy which still warms the hearts of many Socialistic citizens of these United States. However, with all due respect to parliamentary survivals, it may be said that faith in political democracy belongs more appropriately to the historians of revolution than to its prophets. Time was, in the days of rampant monarchy, when government was looked upon as an enemy of the people. So general was this feeling, that a profound distrust of governmental activity outlasted the French Revolution and the political upheavals of the early nineteenth century; in the days of *laissez faire*, neither masters nor men put trust in the State, and the new regime of economic oppression was built up for the most part without the exertion of governmental aid in behalf of the employers, or of governmental opposition in behalf of the workers. While the functional and economic organization of society was thus taking form entirely outside the field of politics, certain of the "benevolent bourgeoisie" were engaged in broadening the foundation of political government by extending the franchise to the lower classes. As the workers in increasing numbers were brought within the scope of this geographic and political organization, they began to hope for relief from economic wrongs through political action, while the employers soon learned, on the other hand, that little was to be feared from attacks in this quarter. In other words, the

first efforts at the reintegration of the "economic man" and the "citizen" were made in the hope that actual inequality in the economic field could somehow be assimilated to theoretical equality in the political field. The first result of increasing hopefulness on the part of the workers, coupled with comparative indifference and even generosity on the part of the employers, was the enactment of welfare legislation beneficial to factory employees. But before long the possessing classes also became active in behalf of special legislation; protective tariffs, state subsidies, and similar grants favourable to their interests were passed by the democratic parliaments of industrialized countries, and from this time forth possessors and non-possessors alike looked to the re-expanded State for benefits of every sort. And ever since, by handing out legislation first with one hand and then with the other, the professional politicians have done what they could to preserve the popular faith in the efficacy of the system.

This scheme of large promises and limited performance has worked so well that the victims of economic injustice have generally felt that abuses of production and distribution still persist because the government is neither strong enough nor democratic enough to resist the pressure of special interests. As a remedy, liberalism proposes to strengthen and democratize the State to such an extent that it will be able to correct the evils of production under the present system, while political Socialism would aggrandize the State still further by giving over to it the ownership and control of the means of production, with political democracy as the main check upon bureaucratic management. Liberalism and this particular brand of Socialism differ as to the disposition they propose to make of the ownership of the means of production, but they are alike in that each proposes to control economic activities by indirect and political means.

At the moment, there is no special excuse for discussing the faith of liberals in the Great State. Certain items in the Socialist program for 1920 are, however, of very timely interest. According to the Socialist Declaration of Principles, it is "the supreme social task of the workers" to take "the economic and political power from the capitalist class." In order to perform this task "by orderly and constitutional methods," "the workers must be organized as a political party"; it will be the aim of this party "to secure a majority in Congress and in every State Legislature," and thereupon "to reorganize the government in form and substance so as to change it from a tool of repression into an instrument of social and industrial service." To this end, the Platform proposes that the President and the Vice-President be elected by direct popular ballot, that the Cabinet be made responsible to Congress, and that the Constitution be made amendable by a majority vote of the electorate.

Into the hands of this democratized government the Socialists would give "all business vitally essential for the existence and welfare of the people"—a category which is to include banks and insurance companies, as well as railroads, steamship lines, packing plants and all other industries "operating on a national scale."

If the programme stopped with proposals for the overhauling of the machinery of government and the nationalization of industry, one would say that it constituted a confession of supreme faith in political democracy. But it does not stop there; it goes on to

admit a principle that is repugnant to all political tradition—the principle that association in work may be as solid a basis of social organization as adjacency of domicile.

Since the Socialist party is primarily a *political* party, this principle is accepted with reluctance and at something less than its full value. The original and "moderate" draft of the Declaration of Principles, as submitted to the Convention, admitted that "the Socialistic transformation can not be successfully accomplished by political victories alone," and went on to endorse the efforts of the workers "to secure a greater share in the management of industries through their labour unions and co-operatives," while the Platform in its original form provided that "all publicly owned industries should be administered jointly by the Government and representatives of the workers."

However, the radical delegates to the Convention were not satisfied with this simple admission that political government, however democratic, can not do everything. In fact they insisted upon a specific endorsement of the type of economic organization which may actually prove capable of taking over, bag and baggage, most of the functions of geographic and political government. As amended by the radicals, the Declaration of Principles declares that "Socialists favour the organization of labour along the lines of *industrial unionism*"; and the amended Platform summons all honest enemies of oppression "to prepare for a complete reorganization of our social system, based upon public ownership of public necessities, [and] upon government by representatives chosen from *occupational* as well as from geographic groups. . . ." The word "geographic" was included here after long debate and against the will of those who proposed the amendment.

Just how the radical Socialists reconcile this scheme of things with their own declaration of the absolute necessity for political action, it is hard to see. If, in the case of any particular industry, nationalization is affected by political means before the workers in this industry are well enough organized and disciplined to take over a large measure of control, the result will be the subjection of the industry in question to bureaucratic control as a substitute for private, capitalistic control. On the other hand, wherever the elements of organization and discipline are present in sufficient measure to fit the workers for the acceptance of responsibility, they are well able to force nationalization, politics or no politics—as the railroad Brotherhoods in this country could certainly do, if they put their minds to it. One would say that when several major industries have been nationalized in this fashion, it will then be time enough to talk about the organization of a "government by representatives chosen from occupational as well as from geographic groups."

Omit the word "geographic" from this phrase—as the radicals wanted to do, substitute syndical ownership for nationalization, emphasize industrial organization and the One Big Union, and you have the programme of French and American syndicalism, the I. W. W. and the C. G. T. Keep the double programme of political and economic action, substitute guild ownership and operation for syndicate control, and there is the programme of Social Catholicism in Italy, in France, and in Germany. Preserve a modified geographic organization dominant in the agricultural regions and lapping over to some extent upon the towns, but paralled by a nearly autonomous organiza-

tion of industrial workers, and you have the rough sketch of the Russian Soviet system. Combine syndicalism in production and a modified State Socialism in the field of distribution, and there is British Guild Socialism. These political and non-political groups are different enough in the details of their programmes, but they are unanimous in their endorsement of economic organization and in their demand for the devolution of certain sovereign rights of the State, not this time in favour of federated "neighbourhoods," but in favour of federated groups of workers. The war, with its almighty overdose of paternalism and bureaucracy, has done a lot to strengthen the conviction of these people that a society organized on the basis of residential addresses can never get ahead very well—even if the residents do vote the straight Socialistic ticket.

UNCLE SAM, EMPLOYER.

THE inefficiency of the postal service has become an intolerable nuisance. One of the many opportunities which the Republican party has for endearing itself in perpetuity to the unreflecting public lies in a speedy obliteration of all vestigial survivals of the devastating Mr. Burleson. The appreciation it could count on would be cheap at any price. No doubt the party sees this chance and will promise us a "business administration" of this important public service—and will keep its promise. The Republican party has always done itself fairly proud in such matters, having the shrewdness to know that it pays.

Postal employees say that they do not get enough wages; that capable men will not go into the service, and if in the service, leave it for better wages elsewhere. On the face of their published statement, this appears reasonable. They say, however, that it takes five years experience to make a skilled postal employee, which seems a long time; but one who has no knowledge of the requirements and qualifications necessary in the circumstances, can not gainsay the assertion. Substitutes and temporary clerks receive sixty cents an hour; and when they become regular, receive forty-two cents. This is an astonishing arrangement, and one can not imagine what its justification may be. Its practical consequences, however, are quite obvious; when the men graduate into the regular service they promptly graduate out of it and into some kind of work that pays better—and just now, when it costs a dollar an hour to get a garden ploughed, such work is not hard to find. Hence, as the Clerk's Association points out, the service is undermined by raw help that does not stay long enough to become seasoned. According to the same authority, resignations in the Manhattan and Bronx post-offices average 200 per month. This figure again, seems very large; in fact, all the figures cited in the statement are remarkable. For instance, the maximum salary of a clerk or carrier is set down at thirty-two dollars, and the increase of wages since 1907 is set down at thirty-five per cent, and all the increases are "of a temporary nature" and have been granted within the last three years. It is interesting also to remark the declaration that the Federal War Labour Board "never functioned for the post employees."

Admit that all this is *ex parte*, and discount every statement thirty per cent for facts, and you still have plenty left to afford a satisfactory explanation of our preposterous postal service. It is the case of the school-teachers all over again. Postal employees even

less than school-teachers can be expected to sell their labour in the cheapest market. There are compensations peculiar to teaching, which the postal service does not provide. No service could maintain its integrity under Mr. Burleson, no matter what wages it paid; still, one must be fair to Mr. Burleson in insisting that if he were ever so intelligent and competent, no service could survive such wages. Maximum wages of thirty-two dollars can not hope to command the skill, the intelligence, the responsibility and self-respect that a competent handling of the mail demands. Quite probably the conditions of labour in the postal service are little known. We take the postal service as a matter of course, assume that it ought to be perfect—which is all well enough—and when it fails, we are apt merely to write complaints to the newspapers or curse Mr. Burleson, without troubling to inquire whether there be an economic factor in the situation that compels failure. For this reason the figures furnished by the Clerk's Association are worthy of wide publicity and close attention.

LABOUR'S CAPACITY FOR GOVERNING.

IT was only natural to expect many caustic replies from members of the British Labour party to Mr. Winston Churchill's allegation that labour is not fit to govern and administer the affairs of the British Empire. It was also natural that the opponents of the Labour party would contemptuously brush aside the assumptions of such Privy Councillors and ex-members of the war-Government as Mr. Arthur Henderson and Mr. Clynes, as so much prejudice and hypocrisy. The supporters of Mr. Churchill declared that labour leaders overestimated their own executive abilities, though they admitted that some of them had proved exceedingly useful to the Government in serious crises during the war. There now comes, however, the redoubtable Sir Harry Johnston, Grand Commander of St. Michael and St. George, and Knight Commander of the Bath, to tell the people of Great Britain what he thinks about the capacities of the members of the Labour party for governing, and their abilities for conducting foreign affairs. He emphatically repudiates Mr. Churchill's contention. Sir Harry is not only one of the most widely travelled men of the British Empire, but he also knows the British Foreign Office inside and out, its methods of doing business, and the calibre of the men who have been responsible for its policies—Cabinet Ministers as well as permanent officials. He says:

It is suggested by the Conservative and Liberal press that there is about foreign affairs and the management of the Foreign Office some mysterious quality which labouring men can not acquire, which must therefore be the monopoly of the well-born and the antequely educated. This is a myth; everything about the argument is mythical and unreal.

No one who had ever spent a session in the House of Commons could remain for long under the delusion that proper conduct of the Foreign Office required a man born with some special qualities and the ten years preceding the outbreak of hostilities will reveal the fact that private members of mere common sense and no particular family tradition had far better understanding of foreign policy than Sir Edward Grey and his under-secretaries. Sir Harry Johnston takes a very wide view of this question, and fully realizes that

during the past thirty years many smart young fellows or clever, observant women from the lower social ranks have

gone out into the world with a good Board-school education and worked with hand and brain in foreign countries, have come to understand Mexico, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Russia, Finland, the United States, Italy, Spain, Turkey, China, or the Dutch East Indies far better than—for example—Mr. Balfour, Mr. Asquith, or Lord Grey, none of whom has travelled abroad to any appreciable extent. A pinch of experience is worth a peck of theory.

He asserts that among the sixty or seventy men and women in the front ranks of the Labour party, there are three or four who are eligible as secretaries or under-secretaries for foreign affairs, and "much more competent, honest and open-minded, and able to conceive and carry out a sound foreign policy than the leading lights of the Liberal and Conservative parties." After accepting as possible rivals to the Labour aspirants Lords Lansdowne, Curzon, and Milner, Sir Harry tells us:

The other statesmen still in vogue are disqualified by an ignorance or very imperfect knowledge of French and geography, but most of all by a lack of visual experience of foreign countries which they have not even atoned for by the reading-up of ethnology and modern history. They are therefore entirely in the hands of the permanent officials of the Foreign Office.

It is all to the good that Sir Harry in his reply to Mr. Churchill has found an opportunity of letting in a little light on the rather dark question of Foreign Office cliques. The following revelation of what goes on behind the scenes, coming as it does from so distinguished and informed an Englishman will no doubt surprise a great many Americans. Referring to the permanent officials of high rank in the British Foreign Office Sir Harry Johnston says:

The older members of this important service are quite out of touch with democratic sentiment and are more or less contemptuous of Parliamentary approval or disapproval of their secret diplomacy. Some of them are too much influenced by personal predilection and a biased education to be trusted to frame and to carry into effect a British and Imperial Foreign Policy through the mouthpiece of some distinguished-looking puppet-minister. There is, or was, in the Foreign Office permanent staff a group that thinks first and foremost of the interests of the Holy See, imagining perchance that by standing well with the Vatican we may lessen our difficulties in Ireland. Such would drag us near to war over the interests of Poland, would like to restore the Hapsburgs to the throne of Hungary, would pinch and peck at a free Italy, or restore if they could kingly rule to Portugal. Another group is all for the policy of protection and a bureaucratic control over British industries and commerce; another has a special spite against Russia, or yet another—nearly extinguished now—has believed in Holy Russia, and would have given her a dangerous enlargement out of their rancour against Germany. There was the King Edward clique, which did its utmost to drive Germany into war, which wants even now to attain the impossible, the inadvisable—the reduction of Germany to a powerless nonentity in Europe. All these cliques alike desire that the policy of the Foreign Office shall be carried on behind the back of Parliament and without reference to the wishes and opinions of an electorate which is nowadays—especially through its press—far more equipped with an understanding of the world outside the British Empire than it was in the days of Palmerston and Salisbury.

There seems to be no doubt in the mind of Sir Harry Johnston that the Labour party can easily supply men who will take advantage of the special knowledge acquired by the Foreign Office permanent officials, keep the cliques under control, and frame and prosecute a wise foreign policy with ability and discretion. His only fear is that the extremists in the party may control those who form its executive, and he believes the extremists furnish the only obstacle to the electorate giving labour, in a constitutional way, the control of government. He has, how-

ever, laid the ghost raised by Mr. Churchill, and assures us that there is no difficulty at all about "finding men and women of great ability, of practical science, of administrative capacity, in the Labour party." It will be interesting to read what Mr. Winston Churchill has to say in reply to Sir Harry Johnston.

MR. HOWELLS' WORLD.

MR. DON SEITZ in his latest book, mentions Mr. Howells as "pausing gingerly at the door" of Pfaff's Bohemia on lower Broadway, the favourite haunt of Aldrich, Fitz-James O'Brien, Artemus Ward and their literary cronies—and then passing on. One feels that Mr. Seitz may have put the final criticism of Mr. Howells in this one stroke. Mr. Howells excluded himself from large areas of human life; he paused gingerly before them and then went his way, apparently out of a fastidious and irresolute preference that for his literary purposes, at least, they should not exist. The world of his choice furnished him certain material, scanty in amount and limited in assortment, and with such as he had, no one could have done better. His world was not, strictly speaking, an interesting world, not an attractive or beautiful world, and hence not permanently satisfying. It is the world of Silas Lapham and the Wedding Journey; and in spite of the best that Mr. Howells could do, one turns from it "impatient for the larger scope."

The interest attaching to his creative work is only such as is communicated to it by a rich and delightful imagination, an unfailing humour, an unfailing dignity and sweetness of temper, and a clear, sure, resourceful style. To have carried one's work by sheer force of these, as far as Mr. Howells carried his, is an immense and praiseworthy achievement. He was a kind of Cardinal Newman in literature; and the chances are that the future will marvel at his having fashioned so much that is lovely out of the unloveliness of the pallid and tepid world that remained, for some reason, the world of his permanent choice.

James Russell Lowell advised Mr. Howells in his youth to "sweat the Heine out of him"—and one wonders that he did not add the Lessing, the Herder and the Goethe, the real Goethe, the Goethe of the "Conversations." What advice! But right manfully Mr. Howells followed it. One reads of the dinner where "Holmes sparkled and Lowell glowed and Agassiz beamed," and one has more than a suspicion of what Heine himself might have said about it. Such was Mr. Howells' world at its best and brightest. For its workaday average, one may perhaps turn to the superb thirty-eighth chapter of "Life on the Mississippi," wherein Mark Twain catalogues the most intimate apparatus of its daily life. One gets an excellent intimation of its spirit also from the opening chapter of Mr. Tarkington's story, "The Magnificent Ambersons."

It was this world, at its utmost possibility of virtue and refinement indeed, but essentially this world, that Mr. Howells undertook to represent. He assented to its standards and sanctions, accepted its limitations and inhibitions, and conditioned his creative work by them. If his work does not endure, it will be only because even such literary magician-ship as his could not invest his world, its people, its spirit, with enough factitious interest to make up for its failure in natural interest.

CRANFORD THE CORRECT.

I HAVE always been a steadfast admirer of Cranford. He has always represented my idea of one hundred per cent Americanism—American idealism translated into vital action. Though not yet thirty, Cranford's life has been a kind of serial drama of success, a triumph of eminence over obstacles, the story of a sturdy young grappler with life's problems. For, as he once confided to me, he was born with the success psychology of the typical American.

Cranford's talent for getting ahead in the world antedates his memory, for five months before he was born (in the Louis XIV room of his residence overlooking Glen Cove), his mother entered him at St. Marks. She was a very modern woman for those days (quite *émancipée* as Cranford expressed it) and, taking no stock in the current biological superstitions concerning the determination of sex, achieved a son by the prenatal foresight of a low meat diet and sleeping on the left side. Her knowledge has been twice vindicated since, for Cranford is the eldest of three brothers.

Cranford's father wanted him to enter Harvard, as all the male members of the family had done since the days of the Salem witches, but Cranford decided on Yale because, as he said, Harvard was too snobbish and Yale had the true democratic spirit. His choice was amply rewarded by his personal success. True, in his studies he was rather weak in history and economics, as he was rather brilliant in mathematics and English literature, but the deficiency was very completely supplied by the Roxbury Tutoring School at three dollars per hour. In his sophomore year he made Psi U and won his "Y" in the high jump, which greatly pleased his father, although his mother said it was a silly aptitude. In his junior year he was tapped for Skull and Bones. His career as a Yale man was made.

Up to the time Cranford was tapped for Bones his intellectual side had been developing but inarticulate. He had, indeed, once hazarded the epigram that no man could read the "Origin of Species" and still be a Roman Catholic, and that one American could lick ten Mexicans and would do it, too, pretty soon, but on the whole Cranford's point of view had been circumscribed by important college affairs—bounded on the north by 322 High Street and on the south by the Plaza Grill, as the geographies say. But now the responsibility of being "a Bones man" rested gravely upon his heart (where his pin was fastened to undershirt or pajama) and he began to study those political and social problems which he felt, in his inner consciousness, he would have to help solve some day.

Before 1914 his guide in the study of statecraft had been Bismarck, whose "Memoirs" he had read twice—or nearly so—except the third volume, which Cranford told an intimate circle of friends was "hidden in the Bank of England, or God knows where." But after 1914 Cranford realized he had been victimized by German propaganda, much to his chagrin. He became an ardent enthusiast for the Allies. Instead of Bismarck he read the Allied Colour Books, the New York *Times Current History of the War*, and gathered statistics on Prussian atrocities and intrigues. As each new country joined the Allies, Cranford would read the works of its leading statesman. For instance, when Italy came into the war, he read Machiavelli's "The Prince."

The more Cranford read, the more he began to suspect that there was something wrong with America, something that he and other representative Americans must remedy. His suspicion was confirmed by Hudson Maxim's "Defenseless America." He read this book in July of 1915 and went at once to Plattsburg. Here for the first time he caught the stimulus of General Leonard Wood. It came like a gust of fresh mountain air, charging his lungs with patriotic oxygen, firing him with the ambition to crusade for American democracy.

His first crusade was to the Rio Grande where he patrolled the border for eight months and helped repel the great Mexican invasion. He had hardly been demobilized when diplomatic relations were broken off with Imperial Germany and he found himself once again in the uniform of Squadron A. From now on came a hiatus in Cranford's education. As he told me just before he sailed for France in October, 1917, he was out to kill the Hun and had no time for the noble nonsense Woodrow Wilson fed "the hoyoloy." No intelligent people took any stock in it anyway, except to deceive the wily Germans, said Cranford.

How shall I describe Charles's career in France? The landing at Brest, the week's leave in Paris, the brush at Cantigny, the appointment to General Bullard's staff, the billet in the historic chateau near Fontainebleau. As Cran-

ford wrote his brother who was an aviator in Texas: "When I left for Plattsburg in May, 1917, my only thought was to clamp onto a commission, snap into a pair of cordovan boots, put a few fat Huns from a nice unobtrusive trench that wasn't overburdened with rats and cooties, and then grab a fast transport for the U. S. A. But I've had such a wonderful time here that, now they've taken our lick away when our backs were turned, I'd just as soon stay a year or two." Cranford stayed in Paris during the Peace Conference and became attached to General Bliss's staff at the Hotel Crillon. His duty was to chase away fanatics who came with petitions for the President concerning the Fourteen Points.

In fact, it was from these fanatics that Cranford first became acquainted with the Red Peril. He knew all about the Yellow Peril, having spent several vacations in California, but he had no adequate idea of the Red Peril until the Paris edition of the New York *Herald* informed him that Russia (a country more or less populated by traitors anyway) had been sold out to Germany by a little Jewish pawnbroker from the Bronx named Trotzky. Cranford could name the exact figure in German marks, at one time. And right there in Paris were other Trozksys—Ukrainian, Finnish, Jugo-Slav, and Lithuanian Trozksys—trying to lead the Allies into a German trap based on the Wilson point of self-determination!

Well, the upshot of it was that Cranford came back to America in May, 1919, with a message. He made up his mind that he would devote all his time until after the national elections to popularizing his new-found gospel. He would sound the alarm of Bolshevism from Bangor to San Diego. He had a plan of action already in mind. He invented slogans that were full of red-blooded one hundred per cent Americanism. "Bang the Bolshies" or "Riddle the Reds," said Cranford, visualizing the words upon a Broadway electric sign.

When Cranford landed in New York he was a little annoyed to find that his idea had run ahead of him. America already knew about the Reds. Uncle Sam had not been asleep during the war and had set up the very kinds of private patriotic societies for combating Bolshevism that Cranford was devising in his own mind. So Cranford became a joiner instead of a founder. He joined the American Defence Society, the National Security League, the United Americans, the America First Society, and, of course, the American Legion. He wished he were older so that he might join the Union League Club. He wrote letters to the New York *Times* and contributed an article to the *Review* on "Parlour Bolsheviks at the Peace Conference" in which references to the President's redness were very thinly disguised. It was full of jolly puns about dum-dum Bullitts and a House divided against itself, and earned him quite a reputation as a wit. He was tireless in his retailing of personal experiences with the Reds at the Hotel Crillon. When the Buford sailed he gave a triumphal dinner at his Glen Cove home which made an ugly hole in his stock of champagne and Scotch. During the halcyon days of the Lusk Committee he offered his services in the matter of matching Pinks and Reds and thus got to know Mr. Stevenson personally. Because of his *entrée*, as he called it, Cranford knew that the Socialist Assemblymen were going to be expelled two days before the Assembly was told about it; in fact, he had suggested that "ouster proceedings" be extended to the Socialists in the Board of Aldermen. Not that he was in any sense a bigot; he had a very indulgent sympathy with Socialism—real Socialism. As he put it, a man under twenty who isn't a Socialist has no heart, and a man over twenty who is a Socialist has no brain. But to condone treason under the flimsy pretext of free speech and representative government was quite another thing. Had not the Judiciary Committee of the New York Assembly said that the Socialist Party of America "is a disloyal organization composed exclusively of perpetual traitors"?

Meanwhile Cranford saw the star of his early hero rising brightly in the heavens. General Leonard Wood was capturing the Republican delegates in State after State. Cranford began sending pro-Wood and anti-Red plans to the New York *Tribune* platform contest. His letter about "The United States—the One Big Union" was printed. For Cranford had begun to realize that democracy was only a relative thing anyway, and that even as a relative thing it had been pretty much of a failure. The wise thing was to give people the form of democracy but not the substance. A country must be ruled by the intelligent minority, said Cranford, and was not wealth the best possible measure of intelligence? Cranford was confident that General Wood would not allow this

sapient formula to be interfered with. General Wood would "shoot or deport" the Reds, get back our liquor, and give the country what it needed—a business administration. So Cranford postponed returning to his father's bond-house until after the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. He gave himself up wholly unto the Lord. Blood and iron might be needed to unify these United States, thought Cranford.

This thought provoked a chain of earlier associations—before 1914. Fragments of history fluttered at the edge of his memory. Chapter heading and paragraph divisions out of "Europe After 1815" crowded upon his consciousness; 1848 . . . *Kulturkampf* . . . the unification of something under somebody in 1870 . . . blood and iron. . . . Cranford strained at the phrases but nothing came of it. He had always been rather weak in history. Words, mere words.

Nevertheless, even to Cranford, the words had a curiously familiar ring.

EDWARD E. PARAMORE, JR.

THE SOVIET IN THE UNITED STATES.

ONE of the strangest things about this strange country is that it never knows—precisely knows—what is going on. Little but the surface scum, thrown up in daily turmoil of economic forces, is reported in the papers. Our occasional fundamental sensations, a coal or railroad strike, a political investigating committee, yield us now and again a glimpse of the real world we live in. But for the most we dwell in sublime and ridiculous ignorance, and our journals, whether of opinion or of fact-distortion, fail to perform the simple and obvious service of gathering for us the basic data without which we can not begin really to think.

An instance in point is the amazing progress made by the soviet idea among American industrial corporations.

During the war the United States Government, through various emergency organizations, effectively decreed that neither employers nor employees should be permitted to take advantage of the situation to repress on the one hand, or to secure, on the other, recognition for trade unions. The *status quo* was to be maintained as far as it could be maintained, and in accord with this ruling, collective bargaining through trade unions was abruptly checked. But the "principle of collective bargaining," so-called, was endorsed and encouraged; group bargaining between employers and their own employees was fostered. Thus there grew up a form of collective bargaining which was distinctly limited and was quite apparently designed to please the employer while prohibiting free choice on the part of the employee. This group-negotiating persists under the name of "shop committees," "employee representation," "company unions," "works councils," and "industrial democracy."

Within the past year several books and many reports by employers' associations, chambers of commerce, and governmental agencies have explained and favoured collective bargaining of this variety. Quacks who live by selling ideas to the managers of industrial enterprises have reaped rich harvests by the easy process of charging large fees in return for a few hours of consultation: a good friend of mine rid himself of a thousand dollars, which otherwise would have been excess profits, to sit at the feet of a faker of this stamp. Instances could be multiplied, and the conclusion can not be escaped that witch-doctoring in the twentieth century is a thriving trade.

The argument which has greatly stimulated this movement among employers was adequately summarized in the report of the President's (second) Industrial Conference:

. . . A new basis of industrial peace may be found in the future development of the democratic organization of the relations of employers and employees, now widely in progress through the country. . . . Employee representation organizes the relations of employer and employee so that they regularly come together to deal with their common interests. It is operating successfully under union agreements in organized shops. It is operating in nonunion shops, and it is operating in shops where union and nonunion men work side by side. In plants working under union agreement, it adds to collective bargaining an agency of co-operation within the plant. It is itself an agency of collective bargaining and co-operation where union agreements do not obtain.

The conference is in favor of the policy of collective bargaining. It sees in a frank acceptance of this principle the most helpful approach to industrial peace. It believes that the great body of the employers of the country accept this principle. The difference of opinion appears in regard to the method of representation. . . . The conference believes that the difficulties can be overcome and the advantages of collective bargaining secured if employers and employees will honestly attempt to substitute for an unyielding, contentious attitude, a spirit of co-operation with reference to those aspects of the employment relation where their interests are not really opposed but mutual.

And so on.

As was rather to be expected, the official trade union movement represented by the American Federation of Labour, promptly took issue with the shop committee advocates. A committee of this organization secured the endorsement, at the Convention in June, 1919, of a resolution condemning all manner of company unions and declaring that the trade union offered the only method of collective bargaining. The President's (first) Industrial Conference split on the central point involved in this issue, to wit, on the trade union contention that workers have the right to choose their own representatives freely and without the geographical and employment qualification prescribed by the shop committee, which declares that representatives of workers shall be employed in the plant where the men whom they serve are also employed.

It is an interesting commentary on the alleged power of organized labour in the United States that this official action of the Federation, dramatically illustrated as it was in the walk-out of Gompers and his associates from the President's (first) Industrial Conference, should have had so little effect. The shop committee movement booms merrily along, gathering momentum and prestige as it booms. Whereas twelve months ago one had to hunt for specimens of the shop committee in action, to-day industry is literally full of them, and they are nearly as common a commodity as welfare associations and group insurance. In some cases, thanks to an anti-union management, shop committees repress and thwart legitimate progress; in others, it is the fact that the local organization functions perfectly with the trade union organization, no matter whether recognized or unrecognized by the employer. All the king's horses and all the king's men will never be able to put trade union collective bargaining, pure and simple, together again as it exists in the minds of orthodox American trade unionists.

While the Federation was condemning the company union, and while employers were standing pat on the company union as an efficient form of industrial association, the Communist party met in Chicago. This was, of course, prior to the Red raids. A resolution there adopted seems to have escaped general attention:

Communist party shop committees, consisting of members of the Communist party, shall be organized wherever pos-

sible for the purpose of Communist agitation in a particular shop or industry by the workers employed there. These committees shall be united with each other as a part of the Communist party. . . .

The Communist party recognizes that the American Federation of Labour is reactionary and a bulwark of capitalism. It is actually an enemy of the workers.

Councils of workers shall be organized in various shops, as circumstances allow, for the purpose of carrying on the industrial struggle among the workers in these unions, uniting and mobilizing the militant elements; these councils to be unified in a central council wherever possible.

It is thus clear that Communist and capitalist agree essentially on the soviet as the efficient mechanism of shop organization, each being confident of his ultimate capture and present control of the instrument. This agreement is the more significant in that we can not assume its occurrence as the result of open common council or clandestine meetings of minds. There is an analogy perhaps in the fact that Lenin and Trotsky unite with efficiency engineers in favouring the Taylor system, while the American Federation of Labour still lobbies against any extension of that system in government factories.

So the soviet has been introduced into American industry by the very men who are deemed most cordially to fear its Russian manifestation. "The common place of work," Mr. G. D. H. Cole wrote recently, "is the natural basis of soviet-organization." Again—I have read no simpler definition—

The most distinctive feature of the soviet organization is that it is based upon the workshops and 'natural' units of industry and that its structure rests finally upon the factory-committee or its equivalent. A workers' soviet groups and represents workers, not according to their trade, but primarily according to their place of work. Its real basis and source of strength is that it takes men as it finds them working together, and uses the 'natural' comradeship of the works as the nucleus of its whole organization.

The economic character of the soviet shop committee is obvious and in sharp contrast with the politico-economic character of the trade union. Herein lies the cause of the present struggle in the labour movement in so far only, of course, as group strategy and constitutions are concerned.

The Russian soviet sprang into being in revolutionary days. The American soviet began, in scattered instances, many years ago, but it found its best growing weather when the mood of employers reached the Gawdsaker stage. Capitalism in the United States was quick to perceive the value of an instrument which obviously gave what it most needed at the moment, namely, organizations of employees with which it could deal readily and without yielding to an established and sometimes rancorous Federation. Had the Federation been wise, it would have accepted the shop committee, not as a final accomplishment, but as the next logical and useful step. But Mr. Gompers and his official colleagues have become, little by little, so utterly enmeshed in their own system of complex political government, that the economic clarity of the shop committee wholly escapes them. The employer likes the shop committee and will surrender far more to it than he would have dreamed of surrendering to the trade union, largely because he is dealing with no outside business agent, but with a business agent in his own employ. And the Federation business agents, losing jobs, influence and commissions on work which no longer is theirs to do, naturally raise every objection but the real one. We must pay tribute to our own manifestations of capitalism for so promptly adjusting the sails to the storm-winds.

It is or should be a commonplace that in an industrial society the nature of the industrial organization must be effective, must be adapted to the work in hand, else the work fails. What is the "work"? Much, indeed; but a part of it having great use is the task of shifting industry and politics into the next gear with as little grinding and clashing as may be.

Though we may not gather it from the press, it is nevertheless the fact that American industrial leaders are taking thought as never before, and that their thought is more and more directly centering on this very problem of organization. They know that the present speed is not suited either to the engine, the load or the grade. They are willing to pay a hundred dollars an hour to get the right advice. The politicians may storm against recognizing the soviet, but the men with economic power, having discovered its uses here, are not afraid to deal with it in Russia. It stands the last test—effectiveness.

The soviet in American industrial plants varies considerably in form and substance, the variation having a close relation to the acumen of the owners. Here and there the way has opened to real co-operative management and ownership. Mostly, however, it is in the stage of experiment. Such a soviet in a middle western factory has hired a Taylor expert and is getting deep into the basis of production. In less advanced establishments the soviet has replaced the old benevolent welfare association. Elsewhere it is contributing to the writing of the next greatest code in history—the code of common law in industry, in which economic principles, not legal or political theories, will guide. . . .

What does it matter if the idea is fostered by capital instead of by the American Federation of Labour? The pride of labour may be hurt, but let the credit for the accomplishment go where it should. The main thing is to get the right kind of economic organization and as, little by little, the power goes over, it will go over with the least loss and burning. It is useless to talk of "giving" labour "larger responsibilities" or any of the other popular slogans of the moment till, by dint of actual hard knocks and actual testing in their "common place of work," both labour and employers learn.

WILLIAM LEAVITT STODDARD.

STYLE AND THE PUBLIC.

CAN Literature—the real classic thing—hope to hold its own in a democracy like ours? Has it a fighting chance with the newspapers and popular magazines, and now the "movies," all making their clamant, strenuous appeal to the common eye and mind?

I fear that judgment must be rendered against the Lady with the classic fillet in her hair. She will not descend from her lofty station to court the crowd, and they can not rise to her; the situation is clearly impossible.

Our democracy is quite unlike that of ancient Athens, where the common crowd went to hear and judge the masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides, the orations of Pericles and Cimon. We have no hucksters and fishwives capable of correcting the speech of a philosopher. Our many-headed thing speaks a degraded dialect—the lowest and most corrupt form of speech ever used by a partly civilized people: which to copy in its literal horror is the profit of our journalism and the ambition of no small part of our literature. Sizing up the contract fairly, it is

extremely difficult to believe that the Greek mob (*hoi polloi*) ever existed—as described by the historians.

Just the other day an English critic was scolding American writers for their bad style—a very unhumorous proceeding, but it seems the Englishman never learns. It is true our writers lack style, in the classic sense—few of them aim at it, to do them justice—but that is because there is no public to demand it, or (as the publishers would say) to pay for it.

The tradition of style died with Hawthorne and the New England Brahmins. The crowd could not and would not read these worthies to-day: and what the crowd will not read is very difficult to publish, save at the author's personal expense. The popular magazine, intent solely upon circulation and advertising, *i. e.*, profit, was the first influence to discount style in writing. Journalism has worked to the same end, with its slipshod methods and its hatred of literature. The newspapers and the popular magazine, which is only a variant of the newspaper, have to a great extent displaced the book in American homes. The universal printing press gives semi-darkness, not light. Cheap literature is making us a cheap people—incapable of real knowledge, incapable of just expression, incapable of fine feeling. To talk of style for such a public—it is to laugh! Our host of literary mechanics zealously give their aid to down the hated superstition. The mark of a successful editor is recognized by the intuition with which he avoids literary style: in the vulgar speech, it is something he would not throw at a dog!

However, the condition is a perfectly natural one, and we need not refer it to that hatred of great and exclusive excellence which is supposed to be the mark of republics. Athens was a republic and France is. But in this republic we have the largest illiterate reading public in the world: not absolutely unlettered, but unable or unwilling to read books in classical or strictly regular English; just as all or most of our people are able to speak intelligibly, while only a very small fraction can do so grammatically. Few people whom one meets casually have this accomplishment. I know successful authors who can not open their mouths or write a page without doing violence to Lindley Murray (and it is a safe bet that they don't discriminate between him and Thothmes the Third!).

Here then, we have an immense public to whom all print looks the same—but they prefer dialect or scrambled English, as enabling them to exercise the intellectual patronage of the uneducated. Immense, too, is their literary hunger, and fortunate the publisher who can give them what they want. The attempt to do this may be disastrous to the higher interests of literature, but it now and then results in a best seller. Howbeit, I am far from denying that a genuine talent like that of James Whitcomb Riley or Peter Dunne or Seumas MacManus occasionally appears in the motley of dialect: but of their base imitators the less said the better.

Strictly in point is the present ridiculous furore over literary "bottle food" or literature out of the nursery, which seems to have started with the success of "The Young Visitors" in England, presently repeated on this side. Hence the acute competition between the two countries in respect to what Mr. Vincent Crummies would have called the Infant-phenomenon line. To be sure, the spectacle of our great American magazine editors falling over one another in the attempt to copy or "assimilate" something that has caught on, is familiar enough at all times. However,

new elements of the grotesque seem to enter into the current exhibition. Thus, the venerable *Atlantic Monthly* breaks with its agelong, sacrosanct tradition and gives up its pages lavishly to this infantile rubbish. Another magazine of large circulation but less literary prestige, brings out a story vouched for as written by the late Ella Wheeler Wilcox in her eighth year, and bearing strong internal evidence that she could not have done it after she was seven. How old the editors were who passed upon the merits of these puerile masterpieces does not appear, and perhaps 'tis better so—enough beans have been spilt already! But what are we to think of the public taste which appears to demand such literary monstrosities, and the editorial genius which "lays itself out" to purvey them and is not afraid of losing its job in consequence?

The answer to all this is, that the magazines are run to make money in the hustling American fashion, and not to foster a correct literary taste. Those who edit or conduct them are commonly a set of men to whom Walt Whitman seems the farthest thing back in literary history; who would not know Ronsard from Chatterton or a Della Cruscan from a Boston Brownigite. Indeed such knowledge would be a painful handicap to them.

Readers of John Adams Thayer's book—the confessions of a successful magazine publisher—will discover that literature *per se* is the most negligible proposition in the whole magazine world. The author of this book is completely successful in avoiding literary subjects. He never discusses writers or literary folk, though he has been paymaster to many of them. He is candidly of the opinion that an advertising manager is more important to a magazine than any editor, however gifted. But he does frankly admire one writer whose articles greatly helped the success of his publication. I refer to the shy and self-effacing Tom Lawson, whose fuliginous style, like the cloud-burst or the cyclone, seems a phenomenon peculiar to our uncultured land. But though Mr. Thayer evidently holds the literary man, pure and simple, in the magazine world as of less account than a fly on the wheel, he has shown by joining the ranks of misprized authors, that literature has no terrors for himself. It might be argued that by this one satiric touch he places beyond doubt his crushing contempt for American literature. However, truth compels the admission that Mr. Thayer has written one of the valid documents of a peculiar era in magazinedom.

In short, I do not deny that there be many industrious literary persons in our midst. Some can write with both hands, and others are quite expert at composing on the typewriter. But style is in the ivied grave of the Brahmins.

MICHAEL MONAHAN.

BUILDING THE COMMONWEALTH.

In the little village of Dungloe, in Donegal, where he was born, Paddy Gallagher began to fight the child-eating giant, Poverty, when he could scarcely toddle. In the evenings, with his father, laden with a great rush basket, he would trot in his bare feet down the mountain-side to the harbour of Dungloe. There they would wade into the ocean gathering the black sea-weed with which to fertilize their fields. Above them, the white curlews swooped and curved and opened their pine-wood beaks to squawk a prayer for dead fish. But the two workers could not stop to watch. Their food also was in question. In the mornings when the early sun bronzed the

bog, Paddy and his father began to feed the dried wavy strands of kelp between the hungry brown furrow lips. At noon Paddy's mother appeared at the half-door of the cabin and called them from the field, and they were glad to eat their sugarless oat-meal.

When Paddy was nine years old he had to go out in the world to fight poverty alone. There was to be a hiring fair in Strabane. So Paddy swung along the road to the town, pretending he was a man—he was to be hired out just like one. But when he arrived at the hiring field he shrank back a little. All the farm hands stood herded in between the cattle pens—men and beasts together. One overseer for a big estate came up to bargain for the boy, and said he would give him fifteen dollars for six months work. Paddy was just about to muster up courage to put up the price a bit, when a friend of the overseer came up with the pre-arranged remark that he was a fine boy and well worth twelve dollars.

At the end of Paddy's back-breaking six months, he and his father took their money to the gombeen man (the local trader and money lender) and asked how much they still owed. "What do you want to know for?" answered the gombeen man, "Unless you have come to pay me all off?"

When Paddy married and settled down in Dungloe he found the reason for the unpayableness of the family debt. One day he and his father shopped at the gombeen store together. They bought the same amount of meal. Paddy's father paid cash seventeen shillings. About a month later, Paddy brought his money. But the gombeen man presented him with a bill for twenty-one shillings. It did no good to say how much his father had paid. The gombeen man insisted that Paddy must pay the interest on his debt—at the rate of 144 per cent per annum.

"Why do we buy from him?" the insurgent Paddy asked himself. After much reflection he decided on the tactics of his new and different campaign against poverty, and the recruiting for his army commenced that night as the neighbours visited about his turf fire. There was doubt on the faces of those tied to the gombeen man. But Paddy continued undaunted, "Let's try it out in a small way, say with fertilizer. That stuff he's selling us isn't as good as kelp, and he won't tell us what it's made of."

The recruits fell into line. They scraped up enough money to buy a load of rich manure from a near-by co-operative society. The little deal saved them \$200 and brought them heavy crops. Then they began to organize in earnest. They needed a store. Paddy found an empty shed. Again they raised enough to pay for filling the shed with flour, tea, sugar, and meal. Then, if they were "free" men, they came boldly to buy on the nights the store was open—moonlight or no moonlight. But if they were "tied" men, they crept fearsomely up the rocks on dark nights only.

Unlike some other armies, the recruits recruited. Financial and social returns began to come in. At the end of the first year there was a clear profit of over \$500. In three years, wonderful to relate, Paddy Gallagher's society was recognized as one of the most efficient in Ireland and had achieved a fine village hall—concerts, dances, lectures!

But the gombeen man wasn't taking it lying down. He called on his political and religious friends for aid. First on the magistrate. When Paddy became

the political rival of the gombeen man for the county council, there was a joint debate. Questions were hurled at him by the trader.

"Wait till I get through my speech," said Paddy. "Then I'll attend to you."

That, said the trader, was a physical threat. The magistrate agreed and threw Paddy into jail. When he came out he discovered that he had won the election, and that a committee was waiting to present him with a gorgeous French gilt clock, and that fires, just as on St. John's eve, were blazing on the mountains round about.

Then the trader took another friend of his aside. This time it was the village priest. Bad dances, he said, were going on of nights in the village hall. And one Sunday in the windswept chapel down by the sea, Paddy heard his beloved hall denounced as a place of sin. The priest might as well have said plague. Paddy knew the people would not come there any more.

Then came the great inspiration. Paddy remembered how his mother used to try to help the family fortunes with her knitting. He saw the girls of Dungloe at their spinning wheels or looms working full eight hours a day and earning only \$1.25 to \$1.50 a week. So with the backing of the society, Paddy had two long tables placed in the entertainment hall, and along the edges of the tables he set up the latest type of knitting machines. Soon there were about 300 girls working for a seven and a half hours a day, and it was not long before they were getting wages that ran from \$5.25 to \$17.50 a week. Incidentally Paddy Gallagher, as manager, gave himself \$10.00 a week.

When I saw Patrick Gallagher in Dungloe, he was dressed in a blue suit and a soft grey cap, and gave one the impression that if he had not been a co-operationist for Ireland he might have been a capitalist in America. He took me up the main street, making plain the signs of growing industry: the bacon cured in Dungloe, the egg-weighing, the rentable farm-machinery. After viewing the orchard and the beehives behind the co-operative store, I remarked on the size of the plant and its suitability for the purpose.

"It used to belong to the gombeen man," said Paddy.

In the mill, which was once the village hall, the sea wind was blowing through the open windows. Barefoot girls—it's only on Sunday that country girls in Donegal wear shoes, and then only when they are quite near church—were needling khaki-worsted over the shining wire prongs. Others were spindling wool for new work. As I talked with the pretty colleens they told me of an extra room added to their cabin home, or of a plump sum added to a dowry through money earned at the mill. And none was planning, as their older sisters had planned, to go away to Scotland or far America.

"As the parents of most of the girls are members in the society they want the best working conditions possible for them," said Patrick Gallagher. "So we're building a new factory. That motor is for the electricity to be used in the plant."

"Then the hall will be free for entertainments again," I suggested. "But won't the old cry be raised against it once more?"

"Oh, no. We're too strong for that now," said Paddy.

At the Gallagher home, Mrs. Gallagher introduced

me to the first nurse who ever came to work in the county of Donegal. She had been brought to Dungloe by the co-operative society to care for the mothers at child-birth. And then Patrick Gallagher told of the many things yet to be done. The finest herring in the sea swim round the Donegal coast. Dungloe men have long wanted to fish, but they could never get enough money to start the industry. Other plans for the development of Dungloe are blocked by conditions on the local railway, and by the impossibility of getting freight boats into the undredged harbour.

"The Parliament in London is not interested in Dungloe," said Gallagher with a smile. "I suppose if I were an Englishman I would not want to hand out funds for a harbour in a far away place like this. Everything waits till Ireland can control her own economic policy."

"Societies like Paddy Gallagher's," said "A. E." when I met him at his home in Dublin, "are springing up all over Ireland. In 1902 their trade turnover was \$7,500,000, and in 1918 over \$50,000,000. These little units do more than develop industry; they also bind up the economic and social interests of the people. In a few years these new societies and others soon to be created will have dominated their districts, and political power will follow. We shall have new political ideals based on a democratic control of agriculture and industry."

RUTH RUSSELL.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE CREATIVE SCEPTIC.

SIRS: I must equally for friendship's sake and for the sake of intellectual clarity resent Mr. Harold J. Laski's article in your current issue entitled "The Liberalism of Randolph Bourne." Where does Mr. Laski get the idea, expressed five separate times under this title, that Bourne was a liberal? Not from the book itself! Bourne's own description of his attitude is to be found in the phrase, "creative scepticism"—an attitude which is throughout its pages set in contrast with the "naïveté" of the liberal. The book is an attack on liberalism—an exposé of liberalism, a calm and ironic and thorough showing-up of its pretences and its performances with reference to the late war. "The War and the Intellectuals," "The Collapse of American Strategy," "A War Diary," and "Twilight of Idols," four of the seven essays in the book, are so many onslaughts upon the liberal position. Two other essays, "Below the Battle," and "Old Tyrannies," are preliminary sketches of his own attitude of "creative scepticism." The long fragment on the State is, so far as it goes in its unfinished form, an attempt to describe clearly and soberly those social, economic and psychological origins of the state which have been so be-muddled by hopeful and trusting liberal propagandists.

This essay on the State, moreover, does not merit in any respect the romantic description given by Mr. Laski, to wit:

Bourne exhausts the vocabulary of rhetorical vituperation to record his conviction that political authority must be made impotent before the demand of conscience. He views the State as a great Moloch devouring its victims, and without the virtue of thinking in terms of their pain. The whole essay is a superb cry of anger against a tyranny which he felt to be grinding.

Bourne does nothing of the kind; his essay is not a "cry of anger"—superb or otherwise. All this is, apparently, Mr. Laski's imagination of the sort of book he thinks Bourne ought to have written. But, though Bourne was ever restrained in writing, he did let loose in private conversation, and "rhetorical vituperation" might very well fit the way in which he would express himself orally on the subject of this kind of reviewing!

It is not to be charged against Mr. Laski as a fault that he does not understand Randolph Bourne's attitude toward war. He misjudges it as a resentment of "what was basically the destruction of the positive effort" of his personality. On the contrary, the war was an opportunity in which the

positive effort of Bourne's personality, his creative scepticism, magnificently flowered.

Our scepticism [says Bourne] can be made a shelter behind which is built up a wider consciousness of the personal and social and artistic ideals which American civilization needs to lead the good life. We can be sceptical constructively, if, thrown back on our inner resources from the world of war which is taken as the overmastering reality, we search more actively to clarify our attitudes and express a deeper significance of the American scene. . . . When we are broken in on, we can yield to the inexorable. Those who are conscripted will have been broken in on. If they do not want to be martyrs, they will have to be victims. They are entitled to whatever alleviations are possible in an inexorable world. But the others can certainly resist the attitude which blackens the whole conscious sky with war. They can resist the poison which makes art and all the desires for more impassioned living seem idle and even shameful. For many of us, resentment against the war has meant a vividder consciousness of what we are seeking in American life.

True, this calm and dignified utterance does not have the splendiferousness characteristic of the liberal programme of that time—which was, it will pay us to remember, to ride the whirlwind, control the war, and forge out of its mad passions a League of Peace! Bourne's programme is more modest; but its modesty has saved it from the ridiculous debacle which overwhelmed the naïve hopes of those "not less genuine liberals," as Mr. Laski calls them, the editors of the *New Republic*.

"We can not stay at Armageddon to philosophize upon the abstract injustice of war." "The time comes, if we try to hold out, when our nerves are sick with fatigue, and we seize in a great healing wave of release some doctrine that can be immediately translated into action." The first sentence is from Mr. Laski's review, the second from Randolph Bourne's book. There is no need for Mr. Laski to repeat the diagnosis so accurately made three years ago of the essential weakness of the liberal temperament.

Nevertheless, Mr. Laski must be forgiven for attempting, in his review of this book, to defend the liberal position; for it is a book which puts a liberal reader inevitably upon the defence. The liberals (as they admit when brutally reminded of it) failed. But since they have learned nothing by their failure, and are gallantly preparing to fail again upon the same old lines, they must find some objection to the intransigence of Bourne. It may be true that an individual can resist the terrific pressure that makes for uniformity of thought in such a crisis. What then? Why, there must be something wrong with such free thought! And that wrongness Mr. Laski triumphantly pounces upon in the following sentence, uttered in criticism of Bourne's theory of the state: "A liberty that is not shared with one's fellows is at its best a puny thing and, at its worst, a vicious form of self-indulgence."

Yes, intellectual courage was ever a puny thing, in comparison with the huge and sociable mechanics of mass prejudice; and candour has ever been, from the point of view of those who lack it, a vicious form of self-indulgence. But there are many of us who prefer the candour and the courage of a creative sceptic like Randolph Bourne to the pious optimism of these liberals who wear their chains "as if they were a garland." I am, etc.,

New York City.

FLOYD DELL.

THE MENACE OF BOOKS.

SIRS: It has doubtless occurred to you that neither our late legislature nor our esteemed Attorney-General fully realizes the extent of the work yet to be done if America is to be made safe for Americans. They see the danger that lurks in bombs and schools and votes, but seem to ignore the menace of books. They order this matter better in Hungary, if we may believe the Paris papers, for there they are burning not merely the writings of Marx, Engels and their brood, but all works on social and economic subjects.

It is true that the Postmaster-General has done his bit in this line, but his scope is unfortunately limited to what is entrusted to the mails. Burnings, to be salutary, should be public. Of course, it was most effective when authors could be burned along with their books, but that can not be legalized till the Legislature meets again. In the meantime, we should not be idle. If Governor Smith does his duty he will sign the bill establishing a secret police, and then doubtless that noble young man, Mr. Archibald Stevenson, will be put at its head, and all will be well. The more I read about him the more I am reminded of Savonarola. The same zeal, the same solemn belief in the purity of his cause and the

righteousness of his methods. I suppose he wears modern clothes—perhaps at the moment overalls—but I can never think of him except in the cowl of a monk. If the Governor doesn't sign the bill couldn't Mr. Stevenson organize the modern *piagnoni*? I am sure the United Americans and the League for Americanism would help him. You remember how Savonarola enrolled the small boys of Florence into a special police, the *piagnoni*, whose duty was to search the houses of citizens for material that was corrupting to minds and morals. What a glorious change would come over New York with such an organization in full swing! I see in my mind's eye the flames roaring in the space before the Public Library, while the members of the Union League Club, escorted by boys singing patriotic songs, marched across and cast into the fire the works of Jefferson, Franklin, Adam Smith, Mill, and Spencer. I do not suspect the club library of possessing anything more modern on the forbidden subjects, but I shudder to think what works might be discovered by our zealous youth in the homes of prominent citizens.

One serious question that would arise is whether the New Testament would have to go along with the rest. I have heard that well-known persons—even clergymen—have said that the teachings of the Gospels were socialistic. I am quite willing, however, to leave this matter with Mr. Stevenson, whose eyes are so well-trained to discover evil in the most unexpected places, confident that he will let no guilty thing escape. Perhaps the boy police, on rainy days, could blacken out the dangerous passages.

Another question for Mr. Stevenson is whether any boys not of pure American ancestry should be enrolled. My impression would be—in spite of the undoubted educational value of the work—that it might be unwise.

I am, yours for a still safer America,
ONE HUNDRED PER CENT.

THEY OUGHT TO BE DEPORTED.

SIRS: The latest form of picketing in Washington is thoroughly objectionable and should be severely dealt with under the Espionage Act. Yesterday in front of the White House there were several young women soliciting attention with small tin boxes (bomb size), tambourines, barrels (contents invisible), and other paraphernalia, particularly placards bearing the legend "A Man May be Down but He's Never Out." Not only does the innuendo of these words disparage the Chief Executive of our Government, but the purpose of the movement to incite force and violence is only too plainly to be seen in the quantity of red worn and displayed by the young women, and in the prominent use of the word "Army," not referring to the regular enlisted forces of the United States.

If it be urged in palliation of these offenses that the young women in question seem to be gently bred, I submit that that only makes their actions the more dangerous. They are probably of the class characterized by the Attorney-General as "mistaken idealists, social bigots, and men and women suffering with various forms of hyperaesthesia."

And if it be urged in further palliation that the statement on the placards may be literally true because the President keeps so much to himself, why, I ask, should he be expected to come out with such a reception awaiting him? I am, etc.,
Washington, D. C. SWINBURNE HALE.

WHO PAYS THE PIPER?

SIRS: May I suggest that you speculate editorially in an early issue of your paper upon the origin of the poltroonery that keeps us looking on and paying for the continuing outrages in Ireland, Egypt and India. If we would simply proceed to collect the little bill they owe us, the British Junkers who are now living on our money would perhaps come to their senses. As things are now we are as responsible for the British brutalities in Ireland as ever the Prussians were for what happened in Armenia, and that is putting it mildly. In my view our poltroonery arises from the decay of the moral fibre of this nation caused by the bacillus of foreign propaganda with which we were infected during many years before we were bulldozed into the war and flim-flammed into the peace. The financing of English Junkerism by American capitalism, is an infinitely worse danger to civilization than Prussianism ever could be, for the reason that the product demoralizes the international conscience. It is a moral fact that we simply can not finance international crime and go unpunished. Perhaps that punishment will take the form of another war, a war between the Junkers of England and ourselves, their disillusioned dupes. The Anglo-Saxon capacity for self-delusion by moral phrasing and moral pos-

ing may postpone the clash—the only way to avert it is for us to call in our loans to the Junkers and to insist upon the elementary decencies of international intercourse. I am, etc.,
Elbon, South Dakota. P. A. FORDE.

INSPIRED MISPRINTS.

SIRS: May I add a discovery of my own to the collection of inspired misprints which your correspondent, Mr. Swinburne Hale, gives us in your current issue; though of course I recognize the possibility of my offering being ruled out as not being a misprint at all. In the New York *Times* of 11 April under the heading "Fears Armenian Mandate" appeared the following startling words:

PHILADELPHIA, April 10.—Herbert Hoover came out tonight against an American mandate for America, in an address before the Near East Relief Committee.

But of course the *Times* may be right, in which case we have an adequate explanation of the rallying of Wilsonian liberals round the Hoover banner, for in this single sentence have we not the key-note of the present Administration's policy since 1912? I am, etc.,
G. C.

THE PROBLEM OF MONOPOLIES.

SIRS: Your recent editorial on Strikes suggests a fruitful line of economic reasoning that I trust will be developed in later numbers of the *Freeman*. So many questions arise: Who is to be the "monopolist" under the regime suggested? The State? The Federal government? How are the monopolies to be worked for the benefit of all concerned? By the State or by the Federal Governments? Or are the monopolies to be rented or to be farmed out to the highest bidder? The possibilities are too great and the reward for their successful development too promising to permit them to slumber. Please dispel the mist and let us see what lies beyond. I am, etc.,
P. S.

THERE is no objection to private ownership of monopolies; the objection is to private ownership of the *rent* of monopolies. No matter who holds the monopolies, as long as their full rental value be paid to the community which creates this value. Let the present holders continue to hold them, if they like. For example, most people know the northwest corner of Fifth Avenue and Twelfth Street, now lying idle. Let the present monopolist continue to hold it, as long as he likes, and benefit by every penny of its use-value, actual and potential, but meanwhile let the community be benefited by every penny of its ground-rent. The same practical method can be applied without trouble and with exact justice to every form of privilege and monopoly.—EDITORS.

POETRY.

KINFOLK—1620 AND 1920.

In the house of my kinfolk I am an alien,
Our Mayflower blood, once heretical, rebel,
Flows now in their veins, orthodox, Tory.
Only in mine the old freedom
Beats the new barriers.

My mother-tongue in the mouth of my kinfolk
To me is foreign,
Praising law perverted to tyranny,
Condemning a juster order
Because justice is strange, involves changes.

But native to my heart is the speech
Of the Italian weaver on strike,
Exhorting his comrades.
Though I understand not his words,
I understand him.

And closer to me than sisters
Are Jewish girls, orient-eyed and voluble,
Garment-workers, loyally standing together,
Daughters, like me, of a pilgrim line,
Of a people persecuted, exiled, pioneers of liberty.

With these I am at home;
In the house of my kinfolk I am an alien.

KATHERINE FISHER.

SCIENCE.

AUGUST WEISMANN.

It has become a commonplace that the most abstruse researches may by a sudden twist acquire an eminently practical bearing. The actuary of an insurance company bases his computations on the calculus of probability, the X-ray specialist avails himself of a physicist's discovery made without thought of useful application, an up-to-date farmer is dependent on soil chemistry. But notable as such influences on life have been, they appear even in their totality almost trivial as compared with the influences, real and potential, exerted since half a century ago by the course of biological thinking. The applications of physics and chemistry have indeed assuaged suffering and added enormously to human comfort. But they have not revolutionized the world-view of the educated laity after the manner of Darwin's doctrine, nor do they imply a complete abandonment of old ethical conceptions and novel schemes for the rearrangement of society as radical as Plato's, such as were hatched or at least prefigured by Darwin's successors. Two of these stand pre-eminent in their influence on modern sociological theory—Weismann and Galton. It may be safely asserted that the whole of neo-aristocratic philosophy, so far as it has not a purely temperamental basis, rests on the pillars of Weismann's and Galton's views on heredity and of Galton's conception of individual variability. Not that the "scientific" neo-aristocrat has founded his principles on an objective study of biological facts. Quite the contrary. His biologizing is an afterthought, a "rationalization," as the Freudians would say, by which he seeks to justify personal predilection and prejudice. But in order to understand and to thwart his propaganda it is indispensable to turn to his scientific mainstays, and that is a far from unprofitable task. For, say what one will in criticism, Weismann and Galton were men of lofty intellectual stature and are well worthy of consideration on their own account. As to Weismann, comprehension of his work has been brought within the reach of the general public by a masterly exposition that has recently reached this country. Within the narrow compass of less than three hundred pages¹ the anatomist Ernst Gaupp succeeds in describing the development of his hero's philosophy of the organic kingdom through all its meanderings as he amplified and adapted it to embrace novel discoveries. Thus we gain a picture of an historically significant system of biological thought and also of an interesting and typical scientific personality.

For many years Weismann shared with Haeckel the honour of leadership among German Darwinians. The two men differed widely in their interests, their methods, their scientific views. Haeckel was absorbed in the task of tracing relationships between animal types and establishing their pedigrees. Weismann paid little attention to genealogies of species, but concentrated his efforts on the basic processes of organic existence—the nature of death, the mechanism of inheritance, the cause of variability. Haeckel, the Hotspur prophet of the evolutionary faith, bore the brunt of the fighting with the hosts of darkness, ruffling not a few sensibilities, yet gaining countless followers by the ardour of his preaching. More reserved in expression, though far from averse to

polemics, Weismann made his appeal to a smaller, more academic discipleship; and as zoological fashion veered from comparative anatomy and palæontology to the study of heredity he became in larger and larger measure the leader of the professionals. In the course of time, Weismann's attitude toward certain fundamental principles of evolution came to differ from Haeckel's, and from Darwin's as well. The difference lay in his estimate of the rôle of natural selection as a factor in evolution. Darwin had of course, himself, together with Wallace, thrust this principle into the arena of scientific discussion. But Darwin never wholly discarded as a complimentary cause the principle elucidated by Lamarck. His French predecessor had started from what everyday experience put beyond the possibility of doubt, the influence of use or disuse in strengthening or weakening an organ; but he taught further that the effects of such alterations in the individual's make-up could be transmitted to his offspring. The blacksmith, according to this theory, could not only improve his muscle by constant exercise, but his son would profit thereby and *start* at an advantage as compared with his father. It is clear why this assumption should find favour, for it gave a ready explanation of progressive development or, in the case of disuse, of atrophy and degeneration. But Weismann, in the later period of his thinking came to deny the value of the Lamarckian factor and fell back on natural selection as the sole and wellnigh omnipotent principle of evolution. Finally, while as far as ever from restoring Lamarck's conception to a place of honour, he came to supplement natural selection by a corresponding struggle among the minute particles making up the reproductive cells. In this psychic development of Weismann the feature of scientific and social significance was the critique of Lamarck, while the peculiarities of his mentality are best revealed by his speculations on the microcosm of the germ-plasm.

The notion that a trait acquired during the lifetime of an individual is bequeathed to his progeny not only serves the purpose of explaining how species have evolved but has in addition an extraordinary *a priori* plausibility. Thus primitive myths are full of Lamarckian interpretations. When the aborigines of America are impressed with a spot on the cottontail rabbit's body, they derive it from some adventure of an ancestor of the species, say from a firebrand he once carried in the course of a Promethean exploit. But before Weismann this was not an exclusively aboriginal mode of explanation. True, Galton had anticipated Weismann by a decade or so in challenging the generally accepted doctrine, but it was Weismann who systematically exposed the flimsiness of the alleged evidence and systematically offered alternative interpretations for phenomena that seemed unintelligible without recourse to Lamarck's conception.

Perhaps one of the strongest psychological arguments adduced by Weismann was the one that sapped the plausibility of the older explanation. It is clear that with species in which there is a differentiation of sex any trait can be inherited only through the reproductive cells of the parents, the father's sperm and the mother's egg-cell. If, then, an experience acquired by the parent is to be transmitted to the child, it implies that the exercise or disuse of the part in question somehow came to alter the reproductive substance. But it means more: the individual experiences must not only influence the germ-cell but must affect it in so definite a way that the offspring

¹ "August Weismann: Sein Leben und Sein Werk." Ernst Gaupp. Jena: Fischer.

developing from the germ shall copy precisely the alteration produced in the parent. But, how such *specific* change in the germinal substance can be brought about is quite inconceivable. "How," asks Conklin, "could defective nutrition, which leads to the production of rickets, affect the germ-cells, which contain no bones, so as to produce rickets in subsequent generations, although well nourished? Or, how could overexertion, leading to hypertrophy of the heart, so affect the germ-cells that they, in turn, would produce hypertrophied hearts in the absence of overexertion, seeing that germ cells have no hearts?" The argument is unanswerable. Yet "inconceivable" is a highly subjective term, and it has happened more than once that what the sages pronounced as impossible nevertheless turned out to be true. Weismann wisely did not content himself with *a priori* considerations, but began to experiment and to analyse the alleged cases of Lamarckian inheritance.

First of all, there were the supposed instances of inherited mutilations. Before Weismann launched his attack on the Lamarckian theory, reputable naturalists believed that an injury in the parent might produce a corresponding injury in the descendants. Short-tailed sheep, for instance, were supposed to derive their peculiarity from a disfigurement of their progenitors. But Weismann pointed out that the causal nexus assumed was fictitious: breeders of a certain variety of sheep have regularly docked their tails for over a century, yet in not a single instance did the mutilated animals give birth to tailless offspring. This is all the more remarkable because another variety of sheep exists that is characterized by hereditary taillessness: in other words, the trait does not lie beyond the potentialities of the species, but it can not be induced by *mutilation*. Weismann himself conducted a long series of experiments with mice; for twenty-two generations he lopped off the tails of his subject but of 1592 mice born of these artificially disfigured parents not a single one lacked a tail. The deformations practised by various peoples for æsthetic or religious purposes since time immemorial form another case in point. The children of Indians accustomed to sever a finger joint in mourning are born with unamputated hands; those of East African Negroes who perforate the lobe of the ear have normal ears; circumcision has produced no hereditary result among the numerous Australian, African and Asiatic peoples with whom it is an indispensable preliminary to marriage. As a result of Weismann's powerful argumentation, probably no reputable biologist still believes that injuries can be transmitted by heredity.

Equally convincing was the demonstration of cases that were not possibly amenable to the Lamarckian interpretation. How, asks Weismann, can the spines shielding an acacia be the result of use? The tree rarely has occasion to avail itself of this armour, and even if some hungry ruminant should rub against it, not more than a few of the spines could possibly be affected thereby. Indeed, use is wholly excluded whenever certain instinctive activities are performed but a single time during the individual's life, as in the case of the queen bee's nuptial flight. Again, what shall be said of the extremely complicated adaptation of the worker ants? None of the peculiarities that distinguish these from their parents can be transmitted, for the reason that the workers are incapable of reproduction; hence must die without issue that might inherit the effects of their experience.

These are capital points absolutely crushing all

opposition, so far as they go. Yet it would be going too far to assert that Weismann has given a rigid demonstration establishing the impossibility of the transmission of individual experience to later generations. What he may fairly be credited with having accomplished is to rule out definitely a vast number of cases for which the Lamarckian factors had lightly been assumed. By so doing he whetted the critical sense of students and raised the standards of evidence exacted for the reality of these principles. In consequence the majority of living biologists reject as inadequate all the proofs hitherto adduced for the inheritance of acquired characters. But this position should not degenerate into an attitude of dogmatic scepticism. When the pupa of certain butterflies is subjected to abnormal cold the adult displays unusual colouration that often reappears in the descendants, though these are raised under normal temperature. With his customary resourcefulness Weismann explains the phenomenon in consonance with his general theory. This is not inheritance of the acquired colouring, he contends: the cold has not produced a primary effect on the body of the pupa, which was reflected on the germ-cells and led to a corresponding change in the offspring, but the cold simultaneously affected both the pupa and the germ-substance embedded in it. This, we must admit, is a very neat dialectic thrust, but it is not a proof. How does Weismann *know* that the germ-cells have been directly affected by the abnormal cold? What can be legitimately conceded is the possibility of squaring the facts with his system; but that is very different from saying that his theory has been definitely established for all cases, to the exclusion of all rival assumptions.

It is necessary to indicate the real logical status of the problem because many biologists make a shibboleth of the denial of the inheritance of acquired traits, as though such inheritance were not merely improbable and unproved, but veritably a contravention of all laws of thought. It is further necessary because of those momentous practical consequences that flow from an unconditional acceptance of Weismann's doctrine. No one has urged these more forcibly than Professor Pearson in "The Grammar of Science." Applied to the human species, Weismann's theory means that the effects of special training are *nil* so far as any initial advantage of later generations is concerned. "From a bad stock can come only bad offspring, and if a member of such a stock is, owing to special training and education, an exception to his family, his offspring will still be born with the old taint." Hence follows the demand for checking the increase of inferior stocks and promoting the multiplication of good stocks. Thus legislation affecting the weal and woe of thousands may be the direct outcome of Weismann's views. But this theory is, after all, built on probability rather than on certainty.

Though Weismann's historic importance for both biology and sociology lies in his attack on the Lamarckian principle, the salient features of his mental make-up appear more clearly in that conception of heredity and variability with which his scepticism was indissolubly linked. To unfold that intricate scheme is impossible within the limits of a single article. Suffice it to say that consistently with his rejection of the transmission of inherited characters, Weismann assumes that the germ-cells are radically distinct from the remainder of the body. The body does not produce the "germ-plasm," it is the germ-cells that produce the body and produce other germ-cells

as well. When the fertilized egg prepares for the creation of a new organism, a certain part of its germ-plasm is not used up in the process of individual development, because it is segregated from the start to form the germ-plasm of the new individual. When one of these cells in turn becomes active in reproduction, the resulting individual must resemble his parent because both are merely products of the different parts of the same original plasm. Thus the germ-plasm is never created anew by the body, but only grows and multiplies like all living matter, and, to quote Conklin, remains "the continuous stream of living substance which connects all generations. The body nourishes and protects the germ; it is the carrier of the germ-plasm, the mortal trustee of an immortal substance."

Weismann peopled the germinal substance with a throng of living units far beyond the power of the strongest microscopes. The smallest of these minute particles are grouped together into "determinants" which are not, indeed, miniature replicas of the corresponding parts of the adult organism, yet definitely determine them. As natural philosophers have explained physical phenomena by a dance of atoms, so Weismann came to conceive variability as the consequence of competition among his minute molecular mess-mates. Through the chance disposition of nutritive matter one determinant will thrive and develop, while its neighbours may languish away, thus causing corresponding alterations in the adult organism.

In contemplating Weismann's comprehensive scheme, of which the foregoing are merely typical samples, one is tempted to say, "It's pretty, but is it science?" The answer will inevitably depend on one's scientific taste. If science is a description of empirical phenomena, if no speculation is admissible that can not be put directly to the test of observation, then to picture in detail the workings of an avowedly invisible microcosm must be reckoned a play of the imagination that has nothing to do with the pursuit of reality. From this point of view, Weismann appears frequently not as a scientist but as a metaphysician and a poet—a metaphysician in his attempt to elaborate a closed logical system, a poet because of the concreteness with which he endows the creatures of his fancy. But there is a psychological aspect to the case that can not be ignored. Scientists, we must ever remember, differ vastly in the character of the driving force that compels their highest efforts. One type of mind finds its highest satisfaction in grappling with facts directly amenable to observation, in formulating a provisional generalization on this basis and subjecting it to immediate and incessant verification. But not all investigators conform to this standard. Some there are who can not rest content with studying what to them seems the mere surface of things, but who are impelled to divine their inner nature, however far removed from the possibility of demonstration. While gratifying this aspiration they are often able, incidentally, to accomplish or to stimulate others to accomplish notable results of a more tangible character, or to suggest points of view that remain for decades in the foreground of discussion. To this category Weismann manifestly belongs. He can not fairly be compared with men of the other category, because these types are incommensurable. But in his own class, his rank must ever be a high one because of the numerous fertile ideas he has contributed for the elaboration of evolutionary theory.

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

MISCELLANY.

ONE of the hope-inspiring facts of life is that thoughtful people are to be found everywhere. At the Plaza one noon I noticed a man at luncheon laying down the law to his two table-companions, one of whom was a young woman of foreign appearance. "Go back," he said, with great emphasis, "and tell Rolland and Barbusse that there can be no such thing as they dream of, no great, free fellowship in literature and the arts, 'until the economic fundamental is established." Two days later, at dinner in the Gotham, I overheard one of a small party near me, a prosperous-looking man, apparently a man of affairs, raise the desponding question, "How is it that, all over the world, Governments are proving themselves enemies of the people?" It seemed odd to hear such doctrines broached in these places. A day or two afterwards, in an Armenian restaurant on Lexington Avenue, I heard a young man and a young woman speculating very sensibly about the prospect of a gigantic collapse of credit and industry. Then next day, as the keeper of a shabby little cigar-shop on Sixth Avenue handed me a small purchase, he said, "Didja see what that guy over in France is tryin' to do, breakin' up the labour-unions? Ain't that the rottenest thing y'veer heard of?" Mostly fools, perhaps—Carlyle may have been right, but I think Cervantes was nearer the mark when he said, "The mountains breed learned men, and philosophers are found in the huts of shepherds."

THE latest scene in the passing of the sceptre of monarchy has been staged by the Danish importer who has just purchased the household furniture of the ex-Kaiser. This thrifty merchant, seeking a suitable market for his wares—"three complete salon sets from two royal palaces in Berlin and another in Munich," explains the *New York Sun* with great relish—very properly and naturally is bringing them to the United States. No doubt they will promptly be acquired by Mr. Gary or Mr. Morgan or some other of our barons of empurpled privilege, in any of whose spacious palaces they will soon feel pleasantly at home. But is it not in order to suggest that a grateful country should purchase this furniture by popular subscription and give it to Mr. Wilson for the furnishing of his new home when he moves next year?

PROBABLY there are available statistics indicating the relative popularity of American cities as meeting-places for large conventions. Every profession, trade and social activity is organized, and every organization meets at least once a year. I have attended many more conventions outside New York than in that city, and I have found that, though outsiders prefer New York, as a rule, because it enables them to kill several birds besides the business of the meeting, New York is not often an eager applicant for the honour of entertaining visiting delegations. There may be several reasons for this. The metropolitan hotels are usually filled to capacity at exorbitant prices, with the normal rush of buyers and sight-seers at the convention season, hence are reluctant to tempt organizations with special cut-rates. The business men upon whom the arrangements might devolve are not ready to make sacrifices for the necessary preparations, and for the entertainment of visiting delegates, because they know that the important ones will come to New York anyhow and will absorb entertainment from the wealth that lies at every hand without adhering to such programmes as are inevitable in other cities.

LET a trade organization numbering 300 meet for three days at a New York hotel; the members go about, wearing their badges and, so long as they remain within the hotel they are proudly conscious of themselves as an entity. Once they trickle out on Broadway they are lost in the whirlpool. In a few minutes they protect them-

selves from curious glances by unpinning the red and gold ribbons from their lapels. They cease to be members of the National Rolling-pin Manufacturers and become mere drops in the roaring current. But let them meet in Columbus, Ohio, St. Paul, Minn., or Buffalo, N. Y., and what happens? The mayor welcomes them in behalf of the city; the chamber of commerce gives them a luncheon; the local industries affected knock off work in order to entertain the guests, and the newspapers report the sessions, print friendly caricatures of the speakers and officers, and reproduce the scene of the banquet which is the orthodox closing of all conventions. Small wonder that even the members from small towns willingly acquiesce in the choice of another small town for the next year's meeting, even if they tremble sympathetically at the magnetic attraction of New York.

A FORTNIGHT ago the Southern Baptists met in Washington. Every Baptist must have felt a thrill of pride and proprietorship upon leaving the Union Station at observing the crowds of brother-and-sister-Baptists in line at the registration-place in a former Y. M. C. A. building close by. The site itself suggested that the President and the Congress had set apart the most conspicuous place in the capitol for receiving the distinguished gathering. No ambassador or senator returning to town could miss it. The Baptists, in charge of guides, marched into the Senate chamber, to the House, sat in the visitors' galleries for a few minutes and listened to the country being saved, and marched out again, only to proceed to some other point at which they were respectfully received. They spilled over the city; they captured *their* Washington. Imagine the same crowd of simple country folk in cold New York! Would the Grand Central Station have put a desk in the corridor for their information or appropriated a room for their convenience, as the Union Station did? No, New York is as impersonal as the ocean: it would have swallowed them up. When conventioners go home from Chattanooga or Dayton they have the same comfortable feeling as when they return from being made much of in their old home town. I doubt if even Broadway's lights and the Hippodrome afford anything like a satisfactory substitute.

THE world is informed by Mr. Hearst's Universal News Service that His Majesty King George V has lately renamed the "spacious and magnificent suite" in Buckingham Palace which since the President's visit has been known as the "Wilson Room." It is now called the "Versailles Room." Regrettable though it be, the story seems plausible enough, but whether the Republicans or the Democrats are chiefly to be blamed it is difficult to say. It is credibly reported that before the war the late lamented Wilson Room was called the "Bismarck Room." Bismarck, Wilson, Versailles—a noble line. There appears a sufficient unity about the names to justify the succession, and to stir our admiration of the sense of poetic fitness revealed by His Majesty or by His Majesty's Lord High Suite-Namer. But maybe there is a deeper significance about this affair; perhaps the King is thus punishing all of us for our attitude on the Irish question. If so, may we not hope that the King, or his Suite-Namer, will soften his heart towards us and, beholding the grief of our nation on being bereaved of a Wilson Room at Buckingham Palace, ease up on us a bit? Meanwhile let us be patient. The Versailles treaty may follow a course more or less like that which the President is completing. Maybe the treaty won't be able to deliver the goods. Its present high prestige may wane and the King's suite may need another name before long. Here is another good reason for making General Wood President next November. Then, if some big strikes come, which seems not unlikely, and the General puts them down in a way that can not fail to attract the favourable notice of His Majesty, perchance King George may name the Versailles room the "Wood Room."

JOURNEYMAN.

ART.

ART AND WALL STREET.

How brave the city man is in his own habitat. There he sits at his mahogany desk and receives reports from engineers and accountants as to his silver mines in Mexico, or his forests in the North-west. He chances revolution, flooded mines, strikes, financial crises. He is not alarmed. He puts his millions into distant prospects he has never seen.

But when he comes uptown, when he leaves the region of oil wells and enters the realm of oil paintings, he becomes a frightened baby. What does he buy? If he wants to spend \$100,000 or more, he buys a Rembrandt, perhaps, or an Italian Primitive—perhaps. I say perhaps, because the art of creating imitations and forgeries is a highly developed one. But let us put aside the possibility of his acquiring a handsome forgery. Let us give him full credit for getting something that is genuine and rare. What has he acquired? Always the City Bond, the first mortgage of art, never the unexplored silver mine. Twenty years ago he dared not buy a Whistler print for twenty dollars—no matter how much he liked it. He was afraid of being gayed by his friends. To-day he snaps it up confidently at a thousand dollars. Twenty years ago he was mildly amused when he saw a drawing of Aubrey Beardsley. Twenty years ago, when he saw a Monet, he asked, "Is the man crazy?" And so he misses that adventure in art—the adventure of the untried prospect—which in business gives him so keen a zest. He waits until the painter is dead—dead, perhaps of neglect and starvation.

The trouble is that the business man who wants pictures and has the money to buy them, is never willing to trust his own judgment. He will bet a million dollars on his own opinion as to an oil prospect; he will send his money adventuring into the heart of Asia, because when he plays the game he understands, he does it with his own eyes—his own eyes—open; but when he buys pictures—even though he be a man of discernment—he shuts his eyes and buys through his ears. For he waits until he has *heard* that somebody's pictures are right. Of the nine hundred pictures recently exhibited in New York by the Society of Independent Artists, one-fourth at least were by artists who in their own profession have arrived; and the craftsman's judgment of his fellows is the decision that nearly always proves correct in time. As Gleizes and Metzinger put it, the opinion of the artist as to his fellow-artist is the tug-boat which draws the barge of public opinion. It may be assumed, then, that at least some of the pictures exhibited on this occasion have merit.

Yet most of the pictures were offered at ludicrous prices—many of them as low as fifty dollars, hardly more than enough to pay for frame and canvas. Only twenty-seven pictures were sold for a paltry total.

What a different story can be told of present day France. At the last exhibition by the Society of Independent Artists in Paris, over a thousand pictures were sold. These sales were made to the frugal, long-headed Frenchman who knows among other things that art is a good investment; and that is why in France such an artist as Picasso has been able to live from the income derived from his pictures since he was seventeen years old. Where in this country can such a case be found? Americans do

not dare appreciate or support an American artist till he is dead. To-day our rich men buy Winslow Homer and Wyant and Inness, and pay tens of thousands of dollars for their pictures, which a decade or so ago they could have bought for trifling sums—sums which would have meant much to the artist, not only in bread and butter, but in that priceless thing, encouragement. Why not risk a little money, as the French have learned to do with their contemporary artists, on a painting by an artist who is struggling to make a living? Why not buy it for the pleasure of having it on your wall? The dividends in pleasure from looking at a picture that you like are a fair return on the trifling expense, and these dividends, the most real in life, do not have to go into your income tax return.

When, across the river Styx, Hobbema, Ruysdael, Rembrandt, Millet, Corot, Monet and the rest foregather over a friendly and unforbidden bowl and see single pictures of theirs being sold for more than they ever got in all their lives, they must give many a mordant chuckle when they think of their starving days and nights on earth when they were painting those same pictures. Picture-buyers in these days are always supporting dead men. They seem to forget that tombstones make poor breakfasts. It is not that they are unkind, but rather because they appear to think that the living artist lives on ambrosia wafted to him by the gods. Strange as it may seem, this is not the case.

All in all, I incline to the belief that the world grows more agreeable as a place in which to live according to the company one finds in it, and is it not true to say that it is the artists, writers, actors, musicians who contribute most to the joy of living? These vagabonds, Heaven be praised, have no reforms, no platforms, no panaceas for the world's ills. "Live and let live" is their simple creed. And the way to let the artists live is to buy an occasional picture from them.

JAMES N. ROSENBERG.

BOOKS.

A KNIGHT ERRANT OF OUR RACE.

FOR the last six years E. D. Morel has enjoyed the full reward of unpopularity. No one—not even Ramsay MacDonald himself—has been so violently detested and denounced among the British plutocracy, the leaders of society, the party politicians, and the herds who run with the yellow press. He has been baited and abused up and down by profiteers and speculators, by Anti-Semites and mediævalists, by patriots proud of having sacrificed their sons, by the blood-thirsty ladies of Kensington, and by all the ghouls and vultures fearful of disappointment. His parentage was questioned. The taint of German was discovered in his French name and descent. He was "an enemy spy." "German gold" lay behind his work for the Congo natives. His constituents refused to consider him as a candidate for Parliament. Upon a frivolous charge under the provisions of "D.O.R.A." (Defence of the Realm Act) he was sentenced to a savage imprisonment. He was so utterly forsaken even by his former friends, that when, during the war, I returned from one of the fronts and met him by accident in the Strand, he was going to pass me by, supposing I was like the rest. He might have known me better, but it was a terrible evidence of isolation. He was

enjoying to the full the common reward of honourable and unpopular deeds.

Similar rewards had been his before, but they had been followed by recognition of a different kind. For twelve years he toiled for one high object as few men have been ever known to toil. His object was to redeem the poor remnant of the Congo population left by King Leopold's foul exploitation of their country's wealth. No one can realize the meaning of that toil unless, like myself, he has looked into its abyss. It was like wallowing in a bottomless quagmire or trying to swim in a quicksand. It seemed impossible to get a grip upon a crime so immense and so illusive. Fighting the Belgian King was like fighting a superhuman devil capable of every cruelty and every lie, and supported by hired legionaries of rubber merchants, *concessionnaires*, speculators, international companies, and aristocratic directors. Against those panoplied hosts of blood-stained wealth Morel set himself to contend almost unsupported. Of course he was maligned. Cruelty laughed derision. The mediævalists raised their bray. Wealth used its money. He was reduced to extreme poverty. Culture passed him by as a crank. Still he persisted, and at last he won.

In England at her worst one can reckon upon a generous and high-hearted minority who refuse to bow to wealth or to put their trust in politicians and the yellow press. There is always a minority to whom mercy and justice can appeal, no matter what evil interests mercy and justice may threaten. By this minority Morel's appeal was heard. The Congo Reform Association was formed, with Morel as its honorary secretary. Lords and even Bishops joined. The Non-conformist leaders supported it. The struggle still was hard and long, but about eight or nine years ago it ended. During twenty-five years of hideous oppression, the King and his *concessionnaires* had converted the "Congo Free State" into a wretched desert, (it is the size of Europe without Russia) and had reduced its population by at least twelve million lives. Now their reign of greedy terror was ended. I do not know what higher reward any human being could desire than is Morel's when he remembers that great victory.

We recognized it at the time. In English fashion, we gave a great lunch or dinner in his honour. Lords and Bishops came. Every good and philanthropic cause was represented. Even Tory editors wrote in Morel's praise. He was acclaimed as a characteristic knight-errant of our race. He was the rational Don Quixote, untouched by illusions. Our Colonial Secretary appointed him a member of the West African Lands Commission, and by the consent of all he was the right man there. No praise was too good for him, no honour too high. Though still in early middle age, upon the reputation he had then won he might have lived in respected dignity for the rest of his life. He would certainly have been ranked among the Knights of the British Empire.

But it was not in his nature to rest content with one great triumph over evil. Of him it may be said that "the zeal of the Lord has eaten him up." Where he thought he perceived wrong, deceit, and hypocrisy combined for the work of perdition, he could not let them go upon their way unchallenged. Such a combination he believed that he saw in the dubious and secret intrigues between England, France, and Spain in regard to Morocco. "Secret diplomacy"—in that he found the heart of international evil and the

ultimate cause of wars. Now that the inner history of the last fifteen years is beginning to be known, who can deny that he was right in his suspicions? In his long struggle for the life of the Congo natives he had discovered what the diplomatists who hold the lives of nations in their hands really are. In the preface to his tremendous indictment called "Truth and the War," he wrote:

It was given to me to see behind the veil, and to realize how utterly at the mercy of a bureaucracy working in darkness and in secrecy, were the peoples, not of Africa only, but of Europe; a bureaucracy rooted in obsolete traditions, badly informed, out of touch with and supremely indifferent to the human pulse, cynically and openly contemptuous of moral conduct, deeming the finest of arts the art successfully to lie, living in a world walled round by narrow prejudices and absorbed in the prosecution of rivalries for the attainment of objects bearing not the remotest relation to the well-being or fundamental needs of the masses, whose destinies that bureaucracy held in the hollow of its hands.

In the hope of curbing the malign omnipotence of this bureaucracy, especially in foreign affairs, Morel formed the Union of Democratic Control, an institution which throughout the war has shared his unpopularity. But men and women of the highest character and most progressive minds are enrolled among its members, and the paper called *Foreign Affairs*, which Morel now edits on its behalf, is one of the best guides to the truth about European conditions. That paper and Morel's recent books,¹ such as "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," "Africa and the Peace of Europe," and, far worse than all, "Truth and the War," are terrible reading for patriots like myself who love our country and believe in the great and noble qualities of our people. Terrible reading for men who like myself offered ourselves at the beginning of the war, because secret diplomacy had brought Europe to such a pass that open war seemed the only way to save France from extinction, and to rescue freedom from the despotism of armies. But however terrible the truth may be, let us not shirk it; let us retain our reason free to weigh and judge.

And now I have here before me Morel's latest book, "The Black Man's Burden." That is a matter on which I am better able to judge than most. Many years ago, after exploring the abomination of the cocoa slavery in Portuguese West Africa, I wrote, "This is the White Man's Burden, and it is the Black Man who takes it up." Now I can say that in this book we may read not only the most appalling but the truest record of an almost unspeakable episode in the history of our so-called civilization; and the man who has possessed the patience and the heroism to reveal it deserves the highest honour among his countrymen and all mankind. HENRY W. NEVINSON..

A BRAZILIAN PROPHET.

"THE great American novel," Anatole France is said to have called this book,² which comes to us from Brazil. Whoever reads the first hundred pages will be inclined to agree with him. Thereafter, it must be confessed, the spell relaxes: the unity is broken, the interest becomes episodic and the treatment rather crude, and the conclusion is vague and unsatisfying. Nevertheless, "Canaan" leaves behind it a powerful, memorable, beautiful impression. It is a book for both the Americas.

The theme is the conflict between the native and the immigrant civilizations in one of the tropical Brazilian States that have been colonized by the Germans. The chief character, Milkau, a young German, the son of

a Heidelberg professor, who, disgusted with Europe and the old civilization, its violence, hypocrisy, inhumanity, materialism, has emigrated to Brazil in search of the Promised Land. In his character, with its mysticism, its abnormal sensitiveness, its desire for a happy, humble life among primitive people, there is much that reminds one of Obermann; his quest also recalls the quest of many of the Rousseauian *émigrés* of a century ago. In the New World where he comes to settle as a tiller of the soil, he seeks the simpler, happier, purer society of his vision; he believes at first that he has found it. Then gradually his disillusionment begins. In his comrade Lentz, the Treitschkean idealist, he discovers the spirit which, in its baser form, animates most of the German colonists—the harsh ambitions of trade and force, a provincial Protestantism, a barbaric pride of race, a cold and mercenary dream of conquest and empire. In the native Brazilians, whose ancient customs and simple Catholicism seem to him at first so sweet and so natural, he discovers, on the other hand, the treachery, the duplicity, the chicanery, the cruelty, the servility of a degenerate people that is dying of ignorance and exhaustion. It is not a young world that Milkau has found, but a very old world, a world as corrupt as the one he has left: all its hatefulness, its ignobility, vents itself in the pursuit and trial of the girl Mary, who is falsely accused of infanticide, whom Milkau befriends, and with whom he finally makes his escape. "The Promised Land which I was going to show you," he says at the end, "and which I was anxiously seeking, is not there at all. . . . It does not exist yet. Let us stop here and wait for it to come with the blood of redeemed generations. Don't lose heart. Let us be faithful to the sweet illusion of the mirage. He who lives an ideal has a mortgage on eternity. . . . Each one of us, all of us, express the creative force of a utopia, and it is through ourselves, as if through a point of transition, that pain will make its sorrowful journey. . . . All the evil is in Force, and Love alone can lead mankind."

Artistically, the book has many distinguished qualities: one regrets only the carelessness of the translation and the proof-reading and the uncouthness of its physical appearance. It has a slow, musical beauty of style; some of Milkau's meditations and reflections are as hauntingly lovely as those of Obermann himself; the pictures of the tropical forest, briefer and more restrained than W. H. Hudson's, have much of Hudson's poetry. Not less extraordinary are the point of view of the author and the prophetic note of the book.

Aranha is a patriot, but hardly of the type with which our own novelists have familiarized us. We are told that he is a member of one of the oldest and purest Brazilian families, that he has been Brazilian minister at Christiania and The Hague, that he was one of the leaders in the anti-German agitation which finally brought Brazil into the war on the side of the Allies. Visualize the type and seek among its innumerable parallels in the United States—the Henry van Dykes, the Owen Wisters, the Thomas Nelson Pages: what a difference! The candour, the intellectual honesty, the emotional profundity with which this Brazilian contemplates his country might well make the American patriot hide his head in shame. The rural districts of Brazil, as he describes them, are almost exactly like the rural districts, let us say, of our own south; the Brazilian judiciary, as he pictures it, is precisely like the judiciary of San Francisco and heaven knows how many other of our cities; the stupidity and hypocrisy of the clergy, the cynicism of the possessing classes can all be matched here: there is a deadly family likeness between the North and South American brands of these universal defects of modern civilization. The difference is that this Brazilian novelist faces them with an intense, a passionate, a desperate sincerity that clothes itself, just because of the force of his feeling, in forms of a mournful beauty such as our callower fiction has never known. Evidently there still exist countries of the world in which patriotism means none of the ugly, shallow, hysterical and

¹New York: B. W. Huebsch, Inc.

²"Canaan." Graça Aranha. With a preface by Guglielmo Ferrero. Boston: The Four Seas Co.

bestial things it has come to mean in modern society, but a deep, glowing, abiding desire for humanity and freedom at least on one's own soil—a competitive concept of nationality, if you will, but one that is grounded in the ideal not of conquest but of emulation.

But a novelist who stopped there would only be reasserting the better values of a former generation. If Aranha himself speaks through the character of Milkau, he speaks prophetically, and it is this prophetic note that places his book among the throbbing documents of our moment. "No," replies Milkau to the protestations of his Treitschkean comrade, "'our country' is a transitory abstraction which is going to die. . . . Nothing was ever founded upon it. Neither art, nor religion, nor science. Nothing, absolutely nothing has an elevated form as long as it is patriotic. Human genius is universal. . . . A country is a secondary aspect of things, a political expression, it is disruption, war. A country is small, mean, it is a limitation to the love of men for each other, a restriction which we must break." Presumably, "Canaan" was written before the war; if that is so, it is a remarkable proof of the universality of certain contemporary ideas. The Brazilian novelist speaks, through the lips of Milkau, in page after page, the language of Barbusse, of Latzko and of Rolland; even his accent is theirs.

A PAGEANT OF RUSSIAN WRITERS.

THOSE who read Mr. Olgin's "Soul of the Russian Revolution" when it appeared two or three years ago encountered a critical talent of the strongest, keenest and rarest kind. That book at once imposed itself as if by a natural authority and we looked forward with uncommon eagerness to the study of Russian literature we had heard Mr. Olgin was going to give us. The new book,¹ if it is not perhaps what we expected, is no less distinguished for being rather a manual than a connected philosophic survey of the subject. It is fresh in its treatment, original in its scheme and far more intelligently*comprehensive than any other available handbook. It succeeds in the very difficult task of throwing the contemporary scene into relief and perspective.

Mr. Olgin opens with Pushkin: he divides his subject into three sections, the "Growth of a National Literature" (from the twenties through the eighties of the last century), the "Modernists" and the "Recent Tide." The three sections are preceded by general surveys. There is an excellent impression of the spirit and quality of each of the fifty-four writers included, followed in most cases by a series of brief characterizations of their principal works, and comments by Russian critics. This gives us a broad view not only of the matter but of the manner and scope of Russian criticism.

With the subject of the first section most of us are now familiar: from Pushkin to Chekhov—that is the Russian literature we know. Mr. Olgin sums up its characteristics by explaining in what sense it is a product of the landowning nobility, a substitution largely for social and political activities, an occupation almost in the nature of a civic service, an expression of a sick conscience and also of a keen desire to understand the character of the nation. What is novel in his treatment here is that he omits certain important writers who have ceased to exert influence, abbreviates his discussion of those who are universally known and brings forward others, especially perhaps critics, of great power as intellectual leaders in Russia, of whom little is known outside. The writers of the third section, the "Recent Tide," are also current in this country or fast becoming current through translations: they are the writers of the revolutionary period and include not only Gorky and Andreyev but Artzybashev, Kuprin, Ropshin and others, all of whom are represented in recent American publishers' lists. Those of the second section, the "modernists," are the least familiar: Sologub and Merezhkovsky

have both appeared in English, but one gathers that for the most part these writers duplicate motives and manners which we can find with less effort nearer home. Idealists, symbolists, dwellers in cities, sophisticated spirits, aloof from social and political problems, refiners of language, students of European literature and of the classics—they are types that seem as familiar in New York as in Moscow. They confirm the truth of the paradox that in literature what offers most sustenance to the world in general is not the cosmopolitan but the indigenous.

Mr. Olgin's book combines with its breadth and grasp and lucid, intelligent handling a delicate and piercing poetic insight. What could be better than this glimpse of Lermontov? "When we think of Lermontov, we see in our minds a huge mountain peak somewhere in the heart of the Caucasus. Eternal silence begins in its clefts and gorges. Its mass of ice and stone looks a picture of gloomy solitude. It seems to be indifferent to the turmoil of life. Still, there is boiling lava deep in its heart. Time and again it shakes from the fury of compressed inner forces. On its bare stony body little trees with lacy foliage climb higher and higher; and when the world is in bloom, winds laden with fragrance blow on its rugged brow, bringing the lure of distant lands. Such is the poet Lermontov. This is, perhaps, why he loved the Caucasus all his life." Every picture of this kind that Mr. Olgin draws is instantly followed by a shrewd analysis. His book will serve not as a guide only but also as an incentive, and a very active incentive, to the study of Russian writers.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

WITH every great poet we associate some special, characteristic gesture, to use one of those French idioms that are never used in France, some act, some pose that belongs to him alone. Walt Whitman is he who used to sit upon the box with the drivers of the old Fifth Avenue stages; we see Milton in his gloomy, panelled room eternally dictating unintelligible words to an eternally amiable and forbearing daughter; Byron to the end of time stands on the wild sea-brink, apostrophizing a universe as romantic as his own hair; Li Tai Po sits in the bamboo grove, sipping, sipping, sipping, and Dante of the iron visage broods on the encircling hills and flings a curse over the ungrateful city of his birth. Max Beerbohm has fixed upon this act, this moment, this gesture in the lives of innumerable poets. Who that knows his "Poets' Corner" can ever again think of Mr. Yeats save as interrogating the queen of the fairies, or of Oscar Wilde without a sunflower in his hand, or of Tennyson elsewhere than in that incredibly Victorian hall, reading "In Memoriam" to his Own Dear Queen herself? Yes, every poet has his proper pose, the active signature as it were of his life and personality, and how happy we should be if we could travel back in history and meet the great ones of the past precisely in these moments in which they so quintessentially reveal themselves! But alas, even those most fortunately placed, and even as regards their own contemporaries, rarely have that privilege. Whitman had long since ceased to frequent the driver's box before anyone knew or cared enough about him to perceive him in that historic eminence; Byron on the wild sea-brink would hardly have encouraged more than one, though he would probably not have performed at all without that one, observer; and as for Tennyson's moment with his Queen, exclusiveness was of its very essence. In short, however privileged we are, we are doomed to see our great contemporaries only under the most general, the most commonplace, conditions. We meet them on the lecture-platform, in railway trains, at public meetings; at best, in the levelling atmosphere of the dinner-table. The moment, the pose, the act with which history is going to associate them is often so unobtrusive and evanescent a thing that even if they owed us money and we were in

¹"A Guide to Russian literature, 1820-1917." Moissaye J. Olgin. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

constant pursuit of them we should probably never observe it at all.

THERE was one poet, however, late of our time, whose characteristic gesture might have been witnessed every day of the year by Tom, Dick, and Harry. And it was the more remarkable because this poet was a recluse, an aristocrat, as aloof as a hermit thrush, a man who never appeared before the public and whose private life passed behind impenetrable curtains of reserve and mystery. This poet, I say, had his moment, his own special, typical and characteristic act, an act celebrated by no less than one hundred rondels of his own composition, not to mention innumerable rondeaus, villanelles, madrigals, ballades and sonnets (unless I exaggerate), an act at which, day in day out, as the seasons went round, any and every member of the population of the greatest city in the world might have assisted. Who was the poet? Algernon Charles Swinburne. What was the act? Playing with babies' toes. Yes, every day in the year, at eleven in the morning, Swinburne clicked the gates of The Pines behind him and marched up Putney Hill and across Wimbledon Common and sat him down at the Three Kings' tavern and drank a bottle of port. And it was on Putney Hill, at two, three, four or five minutes after eleven every day that the Act occurred. How do I know? Because I witnessed it myself.

Was it a low, unworthy instinct that led me thus to constitute myself a spy and saunter back and forth on the other side of the street, pretending that I didn't know I was within twenty yards of him I then thought the greatest poet in the world? In those days I would gladly have walked thirty miles in my bare feet to catch a glimpse of Swinburne: to-day, in the matter of genius, Tolstoy is my irreducible minimum—were he alive, a hundred miles might seem a trifle. . . . I stood there, I sauntered there, I heard the door of The Pines open and shut, with the tail of my eye I saw the little figure coming down the path. He swings the gate, he steps into the street, he makes a sharp turn to the left, he begins his progress up the hill. Moment of moments! The birds chant in the trees, the sun showers its little golden drops among the leaves and all the window-boxes sing together. The poet has come forth to greet the morning.

Odd, incredible apparition! He is like a tin soldier. Who would believe that such a great man could be so teeny, so shiny, so exactly as if he had just come out of a box? Is he more than four feet tall? I see a prodigious head, a reddish nose, a white-and-yellow beard and a turban, yes, a white turban with a brim. What a neat little figure, as military as you like, stiff and straight, with a great watch-chain and varnished boots that twinkle as he walks! And what a funny gait!—like a mechanical toy. Left, right, left, right, one pace like another to the sixteenth of an inch, and his arms swing with the precision of a grenadier's on parade. So he moves, so he moves. One seems to see Mr. Watts-Dunton in the background, diligently winding him up for the day.

AND then—but it's too good to be true—I divine the event, the Act, approaching. It is approaching in the form of a perambulator propelled by a nurse of nurses, with just the proper cuffs and the long blue cape and the tight blue bonnet and the beautiful blue streamers. Down the hill moves the perambulator, up the hill moves the poet; and all the atmosphere trembles with expectancy. Admirable nurse, how well prepared she is for the ceremony! She stops, she waits; the little gentleman is abreast of her. He executes a sudden right about face, he bends, up comes the right forearm, down goes the hand, there is a sudden plunge and the prodigious head, the reddish nose, the white-and-yellow beard, the turban, the white turban, brim and all, are lost amid the billows. . . . And I have seen it, it has happened, he has done it, the great Act has been consummated. To the

chant of the birds, under the eye of the sun, Algernon Charles Swinburne has caught the toes of that baby. And who can doubt that as he marches on he is plotting still another rondel, his thousand and first on that same inexhaustible theme, to be written down as he sits in the Three Kings' tavern over his bottle of port?

I AM not going to tell you that Swinburne played with the toes of three other babies before he reached the top of Putney Hill. It would be true, but it would be an anti-climax; besides, I am only writing to introduce a little book by Mr. Coulson Kernahan called "Swinburne as I Knew Him" (John Lane Company). This book opens with three or four of Swinburne's letters, in every one of which he speaks of a baby whose feet he longs to kiss, one of those babies "in whose eyes, I always think and maintain," he says, "we see all that we ever can see here of heaven." Swinburne, naughty poet of secrecy and shade, perverse lover of how many a perverse and evil-flowering feminine ghost—what brought you to the pink toes of the babies of Putney? Pathology alone can tell: it is no problem for the simple gossips of criticism. Mr. Kernahan throws no light upon it; he is an unassuming anecdotist; but he does establish in his anecdotes an impression that Swinburne himself never outgrew a certain infantility. I like the story which Philip Bourke Marston told Mr. Kernahan of the poet's expulsion from the Arts Club. It appears that Swinburne and a friend had been making a night of it and arrived at the club while a special committee-meeting was in session. It was well attended, as was evident from the number of hats that crowded the pegs of the cloak-room.

From whom the idea arose, Swinburne or his friend [says Mr. Kernahan] I do not know, but some Puck-like spirit of mischief, seeing that the two were well-primed for such foolery, whispered to one or the other that, no one being just then present, here was a chance to perform the 'hat trick' in a new sense and in record time. Hastily collecting the hats from the pegs, the two Strayed Revellers placed them on the floor in two long parallel lines. Then, Swinburne and his friend each standing on his right foot at the end of one row of hats, his left ankle clasped in his left hand, the word: 'One-two-three, go!' was given, and away in a wild, single-footed Frog's Dance the two racers went, each hop meaning the pancaking of a hat. Which won, I do not know, but when the scandalized attendant arrived, it was to find Swinburne and his friend breathless, and executing a triumphant war-dance, amid a chaos of crushed hats, on the cloak-room floor. The committee, interrupted in their sitting, hastily adjourned the meeting to the cloak-room. Here they found Swinburne and his friend, screaming with laughter over what each thought to be a gigantic joke. Failing to see the joke, the committee hastily held an emergency meeting, then and there, to pass, unanimously, a resolution expelling the two offending members from the club.

AND if I like his anecdotes I also like Mr. Kernahan's attitude towards his hero. "We who are of the small of the earth," he says, "should surely respect and revere the great more greatly for the fact that, though the great share with us the infirmities which keep us small, they have succeeded in attaining greatness, their failings notwithstanding." That is the attitude of another English gossip, Mr. Gerald Cumberland, who lately gave us a volume of literary anecdotes. Where the small know their smallness without respecting themselves the less as men, there greatness flourishes, the impersonal greatness that feeds upon an impersonal humility. We know what happens to the great in our own country, where the disciples and the small fry are always so eager to prove themselves prophets in their own right!

I RECOMMEND the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"No. 26 Jayne Street," by Mary Austin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

"Musical Portraits," by Paul Rosenfeld. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

WE awaited our ninth and tenth weeks with something like bated breath because that fortnight, in which so many trial subscriptions expired, was not unlike the examination period after a term of work. Would we pass, and, if so, with what marks ?

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